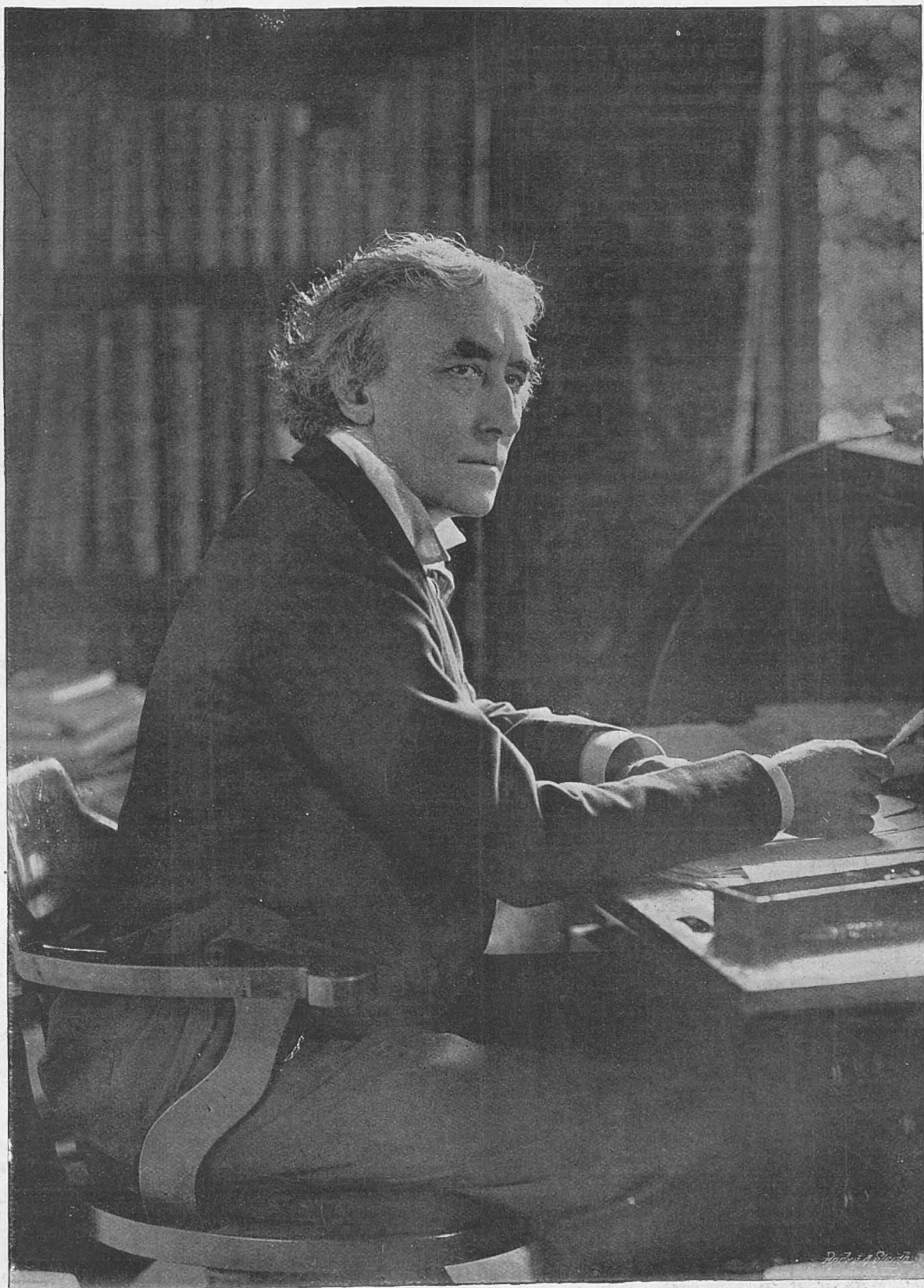




No. 215.—Vol. XVII.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 10, 1897.

SIXPENCE.
By Post, 6½d.



OUR GREATEST ACTOR-MANAGER—"SIR HENRY."

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY ELLIOTT AND FRY, BAKER STREET, W.

A T R A N D O M.

BY L. F. AUSTIN.

"We'll e'en to 't like French falconers, fly at anything we see."

Is it possible that our pride of race is endangered by the decline of pugnacity in the British schoolboy? A writer in *Longman's* asserts that at private schools fighting has been superseded by kicking under the table, and the calling of injurious names. Kicking might be defended as a preparation for football; but the juvenile athlete ought surely to keep his hand in as well as his foot; and to teach him that the hand is merely a clumsy appendage which gets in the way of the cane, instead of developing into the beautiful and martial fist, seems to be an injudicious discipline. We do not wear swords now, and the duel is properly obsolete in this country; but in the early stage of civilisation, represented by a private school, the youthful champion's fist ought to be as ready as his word. When Quentin Durward held at bay the finest swordsman in France, one of his compatriots remarked with pride that the breast-plate of Dunois bore traces of "some good Scottish handwriting." It is better that a boy's eyes or nose should bear witness of a companion's hand and seal than that these budding warriors should fall to with the crude bludgeons of a limited vocabulary. Besides, the calling of names is the beginning of politics, and may lead a youth to Sunday oratory in Hyde Park, where I lately heard a paladin of the Protestant Alliance denouncing somebody with "an empty 'ead and a vicious 'art."

Now, the letting of blood at the schoolboy's nose is an honourable form of persuasion. It purges the soul of malice. A black eye in a grown-up person is a disgraceful object which enforces a sojourn within doors, or an apologetic shade; but in a schoolboy it is a badge of public spirit, which the judicious master acknowledges with a sympathetic smile, or even with an adroit pleasantry when the boy stands up in class to construe Homeric combats in the *Iliad*. I remember a first day at school when some incautious remark about the science of self-defence I had acquired elsewhere brought me a dozen challenges. I was set up in the play-ground to be punched in turn by the crack boxers of the commonwealth. My science was voted rather poor, and for days I carried several bruises as warnings against misleading vanity. Does all this strike the private-school boy to-day as antiquated brutality happily consigned to the limbo of a bad old tradition by the new system described in *Longman's*? Must we say that the younger generation is no longer knocking at the door, but kicking under the table? I should like to have the views of Rufus Minor on this subject. Does he regale his parents and guardians in the holidays with the story of his six rounds with Brown Secundus, or with revised lists of the names he has applied to that rising student? I may be old-fashioned in this regard, but I shall not believe it till Rufus Minor assures me that the dream of his life is to compile a dictionary of withering abuse for the use of schools.

Should that great work ever come to maturity, I shall be happy to suggest a poetical introduction—

*When I was small, to thrash a sneak
Was thought distinctly underbred;
I dared not give his nose a tweak,
Nor threaten I would punch his head;
But, as I launched the furtive kick
Just where his shins would feel it least,
I smiled, and murmured sweetly, "Dick,
You —" choice equivalent of "Beast!"*

*The quarrels that would often spring
At cricket, or at what you will,
'Twas never held by us the thing
To settle by a brutal "mill";
But, set serenely face to face,
We let the angry moments pass,
While each, with a didactic grace,
Discharged his synonyms of "Ass!"*

*In love we never came to blows,
Nor dreamt of an appeal to force;
For contact of the fist and nose
Was deemed unpardonably coarse;
But rivals for a rosy maid
Repaired, in intervals of school,
With state to some sequestered shade,
And bellowed all the terms of "Fool!"*

*'Twas thus we trained the moral nerve,
Of which the greatest pastors preach,
And added to humane reserve
A mastery of fragrant speech.
And blest are all who, small or great,
In modesty or purple clad,
Their enemies can reprobate
By chanting the degrees of "Cad!"*

As I look back across a lamentable gulf of time to my earliest school-days, I can see with great distinctness the figures which excited awe in the mind of a boy of ten. They were the Olympians who liked to set the small boys by the ears, just as our grandfathers enjoyed cock-fighting. But combats among those giants were rare; and when they happened, they were usually governed by extreme caution, like the formal crossing of swords, by which gentlemen of the old school used to indicate a mutual esteem, tempered by prudent suspicion. On such occasions the small boys stood respectfully aloof, and wondered why the dodging and feinting of the champions never came to any tapping of claret, or to that violent clutching of hair and ears with which we were in the habit of making up for our deficiencies of science. As a spectacle, it was disappointing; but when the sparring ceased, and the performers, putting on their coats, seemed to be quite amicable again, they conveyed dimly to our minds a sense of power, a sort of Concert of Olympus, in which the gods were much too afraid of one another to venture into any serious encounter.

Where are they, those *dii majores*? Have laws and learning, arts or commerce, engaged their great minds, and responded from murmuring deeps to their majestic calm? Are they, alack! "gentlemanly failures," swallowed up by Rhodesia? The "gentlemanly failure," I understand, is the man who is taught to exercise his gifts and graces just as well as other people, but never better. It is a mark of breeding to be a good fellow, just like so many other good fellows, though, in the race of competition, good-fellowship is apt to bring up the rear. The "gentlemanly failure," I read, does several things fairly well, shoots, rides, acquaints himself with current affairs, but shows no obtrusive familiarity with anything. There is so little scope for such conspicuous moderation in this country that he is presently found volunteering for police duty at the Cape. The public service and the national industries are already crammed with good fellows; there is no room for any more. The terrible condition of success is that you must displace some of them by the bad form of excelling; and, in order to excel, you must absent yourself from the river and the bicycle track, from all the sports, in short, which, as you have been often told, are indispensable to the manly fibre of the people. The "gentlemanly failure" must give less of his time to physical recreation, which makes him an Antinous in knickerbockers, but overweights him in the struggle for existence.

Mr. Grant Allen bears independent testimony to the desperate situation of the good fellows. One of them essays, in a story of Mr. Grant Allen's in the *English Illustrated Magazine*, to capture the heart of a lady who is deep in the lore of Etruscan sarcophagi. To his surprise, she manifests no responsive tenderness. Subsequently, she is the means of saving his life, and he thinks this, at least, is a proof of affectionate interest. But no; she has saved his life simply in an impulse of duty. It is no more to her than any other life. The offer of his heart, in lieu of the Royal Humane Society's medal, makes no impression. He, too, is a "gentlemanly failure"; but, when he reviews the situation calmly, he perceives the secret of his discomfiture. It is his ignorance of Etruscan sarcophagi. The good fellow who would woo this lady may have all the manly accomplishments in the calendar of Badminton; but while he is uninstructed in sarcophagi, he might as well address his suit to the stars. Woman, you see, is no longer to be won through her affections alone; at all events, a passion for sarcophagi may render them proof against the ordinary siege-train of a lover. You must bury yourself with the Etruscans awhile before you are qualified to live and conquer in her regard.

Serious as the position is for the "gentlemanly failure" to-day, in a hundred years or so it will be unspeakable. By that time it may be impossible for him to excel in any endeavour. The North and South Poles may have exhausted curiosity; Rhodesia may be as dull as Bayswater; the Etruscans may be too familiar even for dinner-table commonplaces. And yet a febrile competition will evolve new exercises for the overwrought brain; woman may discard sarcophagi, and take up with the ancestral protoplasm; and the good fellow, with his gun and his bicycle, will find himself nowhere! I can foresee nothing for him but emigration to India or Africa, where he may earn a fitful mention in the telegrams by escaping on his bicycle from tigers, like the cyclist in J. H. Rosny's story in *Cosmopolis*. Even this achievement would pall after a time in the exacting breakfast-rooms of Peckham.

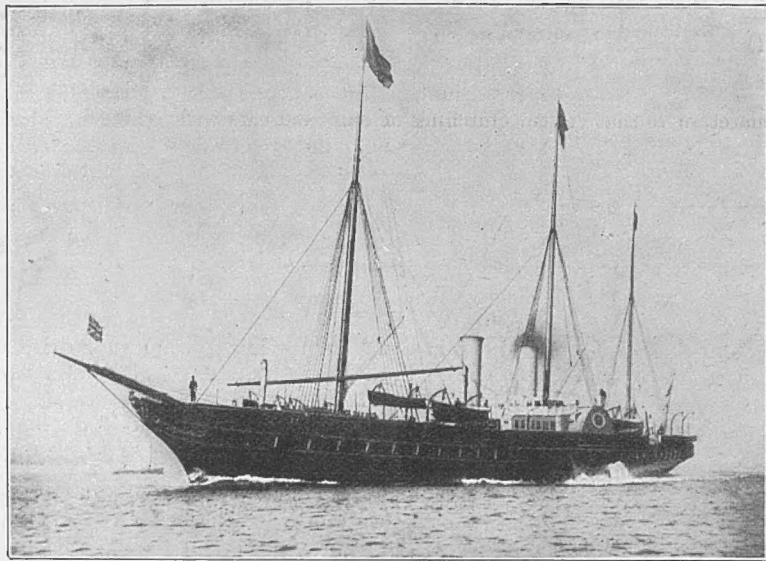
NOTE.

The Sketch will be on sale in the UNITED STATES at the offices of the International News Company, 83 and 85, Duane Street, New York; and in AUSTRALASIA, by Messrs. Gordon and Gotch, at Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide, and Perth, W.A.; Christchurch, Wellington, Auckland, and Dunedin, New Zealand.

THE QUEEN'S VISIT TO THE CONTINENT.

THE YACHT "VICTORIA AND ALBERT."

To-day, if all is well, the Queen will cross the Channel in the *Victoria and Albert* on her way to Nice. The good old paddle-boat has borne her many a time, for the vessel, which was to have been called the

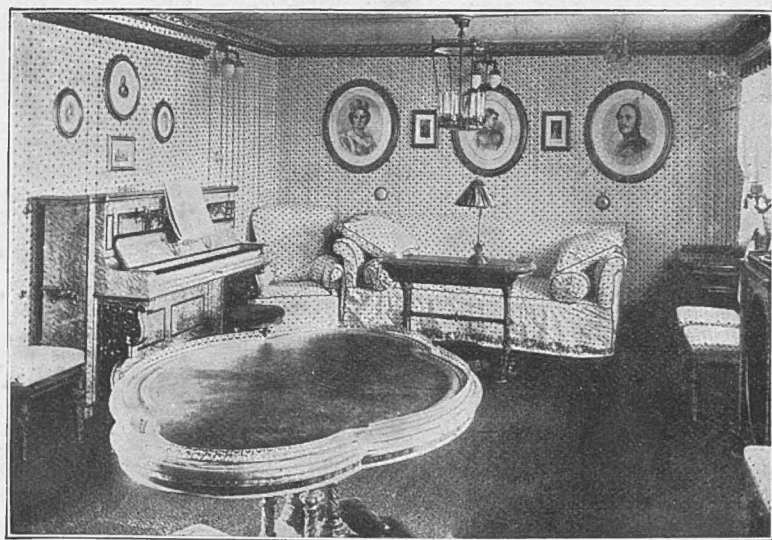


THE ROYAL YACHT "VICTORIA AND ALBERT."
Photo by Symonds, Portsmouth.

Windsor Castle, a name changed by the Queen's desire, was launched at Pembroke on Jan. 16, 1855. It was not, however, till the summer of that year, when the Queen and the Prince Consort were staying at Osborne with a distinguished party, which, I believe, included the King of the Belgians, that the Mistress of the Seas indulged in a trial-trip on her new possession. The first and perhaps the most interesting occasion on which the royal yacht was used for the purpose of an important function was the historic visit of the Queen and Prince Albert to France, which took place in August 1855, the news of glorious successes in the Crimea preceding their departure by only a few hours. The party on board the yacht on that occasion included the Prince of Wales and the Princess Royal, and the voyage from Osborne Bay to Boulogne was accomplished with entire success.

The fitting and furnishing of the Queen's yacht is remarkable for its lack of luxury and unnecessary decoration, and is also remarkable for the uniformity of the coverings of the walls in all the royal apartments. This covering is of rose-bud patterned chintz, box-pleated, and may be from time to time perhaps renewed, but is never varied. The Queen's drawing-room with its photographs of the royal family, her dining-room with its charts and pictures of the different officers who have had the honour of the vessel's command, her breakfast-room—in the stern of the yacht—with its portrait of Lord Adolphus FitzClarence, a natural son of William IV., and Captain of the first *Victoria and Albert*, her sleeping apartment with its homely furnishing—one and all are hung with this somewhat old-fashioned and simple-looking material.

The suite of rooms next to the Queen's, once devoted to the Empress Frederick when a girl, is now called Princess Beatrice's suite. She uses these rooms, three in number, when on board with the Queen. When any of the Queen's daughters are on board alone, they make use of those apartments which are specially devoted to the Sovereign. An interesting

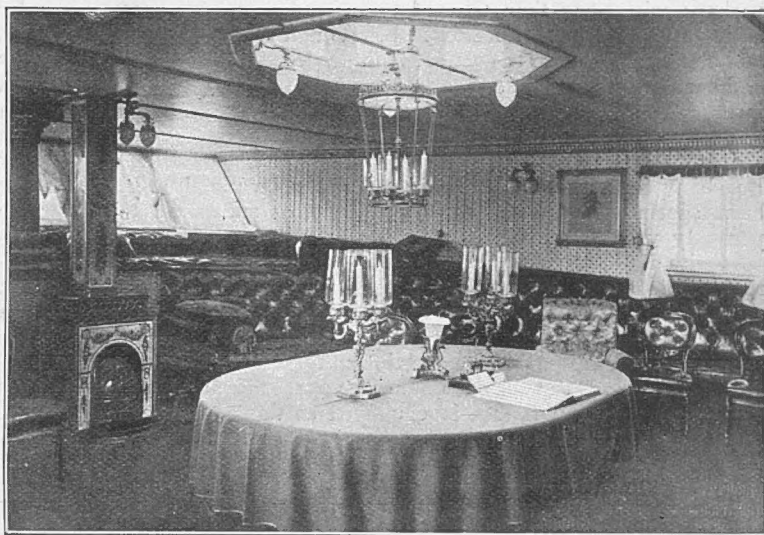


THE DRAWING-ROOM OF THE YACHT.
Photo by Symonds, Portsmouth.

cabin is that which was once upon a time in frequent occupation by the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Edinburgh, and here for many a year with the maple furniture were two small brass bedsteads for their use. Some three years ago these relics of the Princes' childish days disappeared, and a larger bedstead took their place, for the late Prince Henry of Battenberg expressed a wish to have the cabin, and always used it. Of course, everything is arranged for the Queen's comfort, and there are two cushioned lounges aft, one on each quarter when the weather is fine, but these are removed when bad weather prevails. Then there are two settees, one on each side of the yacht, just below the after-part of the bridge, cushioned and comfortable, and these have hoods that can be lowered over the entrances. On the bridge is a pretty little five-o'clock-tea cabin, and here also are a pair of settees, one on each side of the bridge, while opposite the five-o'clock-tea cabin is the chart-room. Under the bridge are the armoury, the lamp-room, and the signal-lockers. The staircase is wide and ample, and the corridor leading to the royal apartments is hung in green silk damask and decorated with water-colour drawings of some of her Majesty's ships.

In the wardrobe-room, where the Queen's dresser sleeps, are some boat-cloaks, one of which, a scarlet affair, belonged, I believe, to George IV. I have seen it stated that this garment is sometimes worn by her Majesty. This is a mistake; the cloak has never been donned by the Queen. Indeed, she never wears boat-cloaks now, and has not been in a boat for a considerable number of years. The rooms used by the Lords- and Ladies-in-Waiting, the Equerries, &c., are in the fore-part of the yacht; they are commodious and comfortably furnished, and their walls are not hung with chintz, but are painted salmon-colour. The *Victoria and Albert* in these present days is used by the Queen only twice a-year, when going to and returning from the Continent.

Her Majesty has sometimes lent her famous yacht to other Sovereigns. In December 1860 the *Victoria and Albert* was placed at the disposal of the Empress of Austria, who voyaged in her to Madeira, and from there the Queen's yacht fetched her in April 1861 and took her to Cadiz, Gibraltar, Malta, and Corfu, finally landing the Empress at Trieste. In March 1863 the *Victoria and Albert* brought to us from Denmark the Princess Alexandra, destined to become probably the most popular foreign princess who ever landed on our shores. Four



THE BREAKFAST-ROOM OF THE YACHT.
Photo by Symonds, Portsmouth.

years later the quarter-deck of the *Victoria and Albert* was the somewhat unusual place for a most impressive ceremony: in July 1867 the Sultan of Turkey witnessed a great naval review at Spithead from the deck of the royal yacht, and there he was invested with the historic Order of the Garter. Another interesting trip was made in 1869 by the *Victoria and Albert*, when the Empress Frederick, with her daughters Victoria and Margaret, took passage in her to Gibraltar, where the royal party was transferred to the despatch-vessel *Surprise*, in which they proceeded to Athens. One of the longest of the recent voyages of the yacht was that of last year, when she conveyed the Duke and Duchess of Connaught to St. Petersburg for the Coronation of the Czar. The voyage out lasted seven days, and the yacht anchored in the Neva for three weeks while their Royal Highnesses were at Moscow. They called at Stockholm on their return, and were not back at Port Victoria till June 17, five weeks from the date of their departure from that place.

During the Queen's winter stay at Osborne the *Victoria and Albert* is always ready for sea, but remains at Portsmouth, her officers doing duty in the *Alberta* tender whenever members of the royal family pass to and fro between Portsmouth and East Cowes. In the summer season the yacht and her tenders, *Alberta* and *Elfin*, all lie off Cowes. During both seasons the *Victoria and Albert* makes trips to Flushing for the convenience of members of the royal family. The rough plans for the new yacht which will take the place of the *Victoria and Albert* have already been submitted to the Queen. In every respect she will be larger than the old vessel, but will be simply a yacht, and not half a yacht and half a cruiser as is the *Hohenzollern*. She will have twin screws instead of paddle-wheels, and will, of course, be fitted with every modern improvement.

W. C. F.

WHERE THE QUEEN STAYS AT CIMIEZ.

Cimiez, her Majesty's destination, is a suburb on the north of Nice, lying on a hill the upper part of which is a plateau, about one hundred acres in extent, some two hundred feet above the sea. It may well be imagined that the new hotel built on this plateau has a site almost unparalleled, and, seeing that it has a handsome elevation of five storeys and a magnificent frontage of over two hundred yards, it may also be suggested that the hotel is an unparalleled sight. It seems quaint that in Republican France the grand new hotel should be called "Hotel Regina," and stranger still that in the land pre-eminent in history for the beauty of its furniture and house decoration the finest modern hotel should have been furnished and decorated by an English firm. As a rule, the French are so disdainful of competition in such matters that there is something startling in the idea of English furniture being actually taken to Nice. However, without suggesting that the enterprising firm of Waring and Sons, Limited, could compete in every department with the greatest French *ébénistes* of the past, I think that those who know their admirable and beautiful work at the Hotel Cecil, the Hans Crescent Hotel, and elsewhere, can understand how they came to be chosen against the world for the execution of so large, costly, and difficult an order. It is with a sigh of patriotic pleasure that one finds our British work enjoying such a triumph.

It is needless to say that the Queen will not occupy the whole of the huge building. As a matter of fact, she takes the West wing; from which the views of both sea and land are most delightful, a hundred and fifty rooms of it having been cut off by an isolating wall running from top to bottom. She has her separate entrance, which is in the western façade and in a direct line with the Avenue Victoria. The bed-room of her Majesty, which has windows looking West and North, and the toilette-room are furnished in the delightful Louis XVI. style—less popular, perhaps, with some than that of the preceding reign, because simpler and more severe, yet of immense beauty and a joy to the connoisseur, and also tending more to comfort than the earlier work. The draperies and curtains are of pink silk, charming in tone, while the wood employed is mahogany, richly inlaid and, of course, upholstered in silk which corresponds in tone with the draperies. The same style is carried out in the Salon, though the colouring is changed, for the walls bear yellow Bourbon paper, the carpet is fawn-coloured, while light-blue silk has been specially designed and woven for this apartment to harmonise perfectly with the fawn of the floor and the yellow of the walls.

Quite a different school has been adopted for her Majesty's reception-room, which looks South. The Empire style has been chosen for it—a style which lately had a rage in New York, and of which Mr. Daly in one of his recent plays presented some charming pictures. The walls have a red Empire paper, the curtains and draperies are of the charming amber typical of the period, and, of course, mahogany—the wood that was the rage of the times—is employed as the basis of the somewhat

Throughout in the workmanship, as well as in the conception of decorative schemes, Messrs. Waring, who most deservedly hold the Royal Warrant as Upholsterers and Decorators to her Majesty the Queen, have shown themselves masters of their difficult and charming art. They have contrived to combine *le confort Anglais*, which for many years was deemed by foreigners typical of our race, with the grace and elegance and happy union of wealth of ornament and beauty of design characteristic of French work during a long period.

In the royal wing Messrs. Waring have shown the same charming taste in handling the suite of rooms of Princess Henry of Battenberg, adopting similar styles of furnishing, but pleasant variety in handling colour effects of curtains and draperies, wall-hangings and carpets. I regret that my space does not allow me to deal with the other portions of this superb hotel, and I should like to use what I have left in mentioning that her Majesty will have the extensive gardens of the Villa Leserb, which will chiefly be used by the children and household of Princess Henry, and also the gardens of the Villas Monterey, Montebello, and Valrose, which will give her sixty acres of privacy. Facing the hotel is a park for the less-distinguished visitors, who will find in it lawn-tennis courts, croquet lawn, and bicycle track.

It seems pretty certain that the rest of the hotel will be well filled by visitors anxious, so far as may be allowed, to satisfy themselves that her Majesty is gaining as much in health and strength as her most loyal subjects could wish from the balmy

breezes and brilliant sunshine of the Mediterranean. Prices in Nice and its neighbourhood just now are not remarkably cheap, as all the travelling world knows, and the *on dit* as to what her Majesty pays for her wing places the amount, my friend tells me, at some twenty-five thousand francs a-week.

The Queen always receives the greatest courtesy from the people among whom she spends her visits to the Continent, and the places where she stays seem to be regarded thenceforth pretty much as shrines. The Italians are very proud that she should have honoured their lovely country, and some curious mementoes of her visits still exist. Thus in the Castle of Vincigliata, near Florence, which the Queen visited in April 1888, there are several mementoes of her, notably a marble bust by Dante Sodini. This castle belongs to Mr. Temple Leader, who was at Oxford with Mr. Gladstone, and represented Westminster in Parliament sixty years ago, and its history has just been told in a very interesting volume by Leader Scott, just published in Florence. The first documentary evidence of the castle occurs in 1031. In 1855, after passing through many vicissitudes, it was bought by Mr. Temple Leader, who set about restoring it to its original state. This has taken a long time, and now the castle is a great show-place. The Queen was so taken with it that she revisited it in 1893, and Mr. Forestier contributed to the *Illustrated London News* a picture of her Majesty sketching the Laghetto of the Castle. The Queen took her afternoon-tea in a little chalet at the side of the lake, and her visit has now become part of the history of the spot. The table used by her bears an inscription in



THE QUEEN.



HOTEL REGINA, CIMIEZ.

stern and angular but not ungraceful furniture, which is embellished by the richly chased, heavily gilt bronze mountings that are still the joy of the collector. The private dining-room, I am glad to say, is English in style; the period of our other great and long-reigning Queen being chosen, which, of course, seems a very happy thought, under the circumstances. Walnut is the wood, and there is Elizabethan precedent for rich panelling and pilasters in walnut, in which, however, there is a pleasant classical feeling and very charming restraint. The tone adopted, as befits a dining-room, is a rich red.

Italian, which tells the incident of "Vittoria Regina d'Inghilterra, Imperatrice delle Indie." The visitors' book is a great curiosity, containing the names of the Queen, the late Emperor Frederick, Prince Leopold, the Empress Eugénie and her son, Queen Natalie of Serbia, and so on. By the way, the imprint of Leader Scott's history, which is written in English, is one of the most curious I have seen. It runs—

Printed by G. Barbèra [Florence]. . . . The engravings are by Angerer and Guschl, Vienna, from photographs by Alinari Bros. and G. Brogi, of Florence. The paper is from Vonwiller and Co., of Romagnano Sesia.



MR. WILSON BARRETT IN "THE DAUGHTERS OF BABYLON," AT THE LYRIC THEATRE.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY MESSRS. W. AND D. DOWNEY, EBURY STREET, S.W.

HAYMARKET THEATRE.

TO-NIGHT and EVERY EVENING at 8.30,
UNDER THE RED ROBE.
MATINEES EVERY WEDNESDAY and SATURDAY at 2.30.

HAYMARKET.

EMPIRE THEATRE.—EVERY EVENING, THE NEW GRAND

BALLET, MONTE CRISTO. Great Success.
GRAND VARIETY ENTERTAINMENT.

LUMIERE'S CINEMATOGRAPHE.
Doors open at 7.30.

ALHAMBRA.—EVERY EVENING, NEW GRAND BALLET,

THE TZIGANE.
Prices 6d. to £3 3s. Open 7.30.

Grand Varieties.

ALFRED MOUL, General Manager.

SPA, BELGIUM.—WINTER SEASON.

Mild Climate. Only twelve hours from London.
Splendid Sport. Casino and Hotel's open as in Summer. Special Moderate Winter Tariff.
Finest Iron-Waters in World. Sure Cure for Anæmia, &c.
For details, address JULES CREHAY, Secretary, Casino, Spa, Belgium.

VOCAL TUITION.

It appearing that an impression has been created to the effect that
MONSIEUR HUGO BEYER

has left London and given up the teaching of singing, he begs to inform his pupils and friends
that he has never left his residence at

111, GLOUCESTER TERRACE, HYDE PARK,

and that he is still continuing and will continue his profession at that address, and is prepared
to receive pupils there.

HUMBER CYCLES.—A perfect Catalogue has been produced by
Messrs. Humber and Co., Limited. From first to last each page is full of Artistic
Merit, combined with an Exhaustive Description of their Machines. A Copy, containing the
names of English Agents, will be sent post-free from the
London Depot, 32, Holborn Viaduct, E.C.

LONDON, BRIGHTON, AND SOUTH COAST RAILWAY.

SPECIAL CHEAP RETURN TICKETS—

TO BRIGHTON.—EVERY WEEK-DAY First-Class Day Tickets
from Victoria 10.5 a.m. Fare, 12s. 6d., Pullman Car.
EVERY SATURDAY First-Class Day Tickets from Victoria 10.40 and 11.40 a.m.; London
Bridge 9.25 a.m. and 12 noon. Fare, 10s. 6d., including Admission to Aquarium and Royal Pavilion.
EVERY SUNDAY First-Class Day Tickets from Victoria at 10.45 a.m. and 12.15 p.m. Fare, 10s.

TO WORTHING.—EVERY WEEK-DAY First-Class Day Tickets
from Victoria 10.5 a.m. Fare, 13s. 6d., including Pullman Car to Brighton.
EVERY SATURDAY Cheap First-Class Day Tickets from Victoria 10.40 a.m. Fare, 11s.
EVERY SUNDAY First-Class Day Tickets from Victoria 10.45 a.m. Fare, 13s., including
Pullman Car to Brighton.

**TO HASTINGS, ST. LEONARDS, BEXHILL, AND EAST-
BOURNE.**—Fast Trains every Week-day.
FROM VICTORIA—9.50 a.m., 12 noon, 1.30 p.m., 3.26 p.m. (4.30 p.m. and 5.40 p.m., Eastbourne
only), and 9.45 p.m.
FROM LONDON BRIDGE—9.45 a.m., 12.5 p.m., 2.5 p.m., 4.5 p.m., 5.5 p.m., and 9.55 p.m.

TO EASTBOURNE.—EVERY SUNDAY Cheap Day Tickets
from Victoria 11 a.m. Fare 13s. 6d., including Pullman Car.

PARIS.—SHORTEST and CHEAPEST ROUTE, viâ NEWHAVEN,
DIEPPE, and ROUEN. Two Special Express Services (Week-days and Sundays).

London to Paris.	(1 & 2)	(1, 2, 3)	Paris to London.	(1 & 2)	(1, 2, 3)
Victoria ...	dep. 10 0 a.m.	... 9 45 p.m.	Paris ...	dep. 10 0 a.m.	... 9 0 p.m.
London Bridge 10 0 9 55 ...	London Bridge ...	arr. 7 0 p.m.	... 7 40 a.m.
Paris ...	arr. 7 0 p.m.	... 7 45 a.m.	Victoria 7 0 7 50 ...

FARES.—Single: First, 34s. 7d.; Second, 25s. 7d.; Third, 18s. 7d. Return: First, 58s. 3d.;
Second, 42s. 3d.; Third, 33s. 3d. A Pullman Drawing-room Car runs in the First and Second
Class Train between Victoria and Newhaven.

FOR FULL PARTICULARS of availability of all above Cheap Tickets see Handbills.
London Bridge Terminus. (By Order) ALLEN SARLE, Secretary and General Manager.

MUDIE'S SELECT LIBRARY.

ALL THE BEST BOOKS OF

Travel, Sport, Adventure, &c.,

In English, French, German, Italian, and Spanish,

Are in CIRCULATION & for SALE (either New or Secondhand).

SUBSCRIPTIONS CAN BE ENTERED FROM ANY DATE.

Prospectuses of the Terms of Subscription in Town or Country and Lists of Books
for Sale sent free by post to any address.

BOOKS EXPORTED TO ALL PARTS OF THE WORLD.

MUDIE'S SELECT LIBRARY, LIMITED,

30-34, NEW OXFORD STREET, LONDON; 241, Brompton Road, S.W.;
and 48, Queen Victoria Street, E.C.; and at 10-12, Barton Arcade, Manchester.

Seventh Edition, Revised. Cloth, 1s. 6d.; Paper, 1s.

THE DIETETIC CURE OF OBESITY (Foods for the Fat).

By N. E. YORKE DAVIES, L.R.Coll.Phys., Lond., &c.

CONTENTS: Part I.—What Constitutes Robust Health? Evils of Corpulence; the Cause of Weak Heart; Diet—
A Safe and Permanent Cure; Quack Medicines or Drugs, permanently Injurious or Fatal in; Food Required.
Amount of; Food, its Uses and ultimate Elimination; Fat, its use in the Body; Over-Eating, Evils of; Food in its
Relation to Work; Exercises Stimulants in Corpulence; Water, Aerated Drinks, &c. Part II.—Dietetics of Obesity.
OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.—"This work deserves careful study."—QUEEN. "The only safe and permanent
cure of obesity."—WESTERN GAZETTE. "The best work on corpulence that has ever been written."—EVENING NEWS.
London: CHATTO and WINDUS, 111, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

ALBERT CHEVALIER AT SEA.

The hero of the famous fracas in the ancient Kentish thoroughfare was lazily lounging inside a nest of rugs in a deck-chair on board the Cunard steamer *Lucania*, midway between New York and Liverpool, as I cautiously crept through the smoking-saloon doorway and, with a nod and a smirk, spoke to him after the manner of the Fleet Street hunchback addressing Mr. Stanley—"Mr. Chevalier, I presume?"

"The same," he replied, with a melodramatic scowl; "and may I inquire—"?" but then his face fell still further, for he guessed that the inevitable and dreaded interviewer had pounced upon him even there, in mid-ocean.

"To tell the truth," he said, in answer to my second question, "I candidly do *not* like the sea—in bad weather. On the first rough day of the voyage I feared that I should die; on the second I dreaded that I might live. Yes, we have all had a very successful tour indeed in America during the last twelve months, and now I hope to take a short and much-needed rest. But let me introduce Mr. Charles Bertram, the famous magician, whom, of course, you know by repute, and Mr. Alfred West, the well-known solo-pianist. We have all been together during this tour. Mr. Harry Brett has also been with us, and his success has been more than phenomenal. Mr. Harry Atkinson also has scored a success in the States. Do I like the States? Most emphatically I do, especially the large cities. In New York, in Chicago, in Boston, Philadelphia, Washington—in short, in every city of importance—the public, to use their own term, fairly 'enthused.' Of course, the farther you go from centres of civilisation, the farther you find yourself from cultivated people, from men and women able to appreciate English artists. And talking of that reminds me of an insignificant little place in one of the Western States through which we travelled, where the hotel proprietor-manager inquired, with undisguised curiosity, what each member of the company did, and whether I was the Chevalier who crossed Niagara Falls on a tight-rope. He seemed much disappointed when I told him that as yet I had not accomplished that feat, and I inwardly felt that, though I had displayed moral courage by revealing my identity, I had by so doing sunk to zero in his estimation. Yet, on the other hand, in many towns in which you would have supposed that the name of an English artist had hardly ever been heard, I was several times asked as a favour to sing certain songs well known, as I thought, only in Europe."

During the course of our voyage Mr. Chevalier incidentally related so many tales and anecdotes, either directly or indirectly connected with his tour, that an entire number of *The Sketch* would barely contain them all were they recorded in print. Strange to say, one of his English provincial dialect songs was received in Philadelphia with the utmost enthusiasm. "All through the tour I had thought it useless to sing a song of that sort, for I fully believed that you could hardly expect an American audience to grasp the meaning and to appreciate the points of a song sung in a dialect more foreign to American ears than the Cockney. However, upon our return to Philadelphia I tried it, and so well did it 'catch on' that it was called for again and again. This merely helps further to prove that, as a fact, the artist himself can comparatively seldom foretell what the public will most appreciate.

"One of our biggest hits was made in Chicago. What a marvellous city that is, with its Masonic building over twenty storeys high, and on the top a variety theatre, and above that an open-air promenade! Truly the American roof-garden is a splendid institution, appreciated especially in hot weather. Whom do I consider to be the most important person in connection with a company touring in the States? Undoubtedly the advance agent. Fully four-fifths of the success of a tour in America—by which I mean the United States and Canada—depends upon the advance agent. The travelling manager has far less to be responsible for in this respect than the travelling acting-manager in Great Britain or in Ireland has." Questioned with regard to the well-known New York manager, Mr. Chevalier replied that his personal relations with Mr. Frohman were in every way satisfactory.

"Indeed, I wish that it had been possible for him to travel with us on tour. To an English artist touring through the States for the first time it is absolutely necessary that his business should have the personal attention of the manager who is interested in him. At the present time theatrical enterprise in America is practically monopolised by a syndicate controlling theatres, and controlling also companies travelling in the States. Now, Mr. Frohman attends to everything himself, and personally sees even to every detail. I will tell you something that interested me very much, and, believe me, it is true. The morning after we had appeared in a fairly large city in the State of New York, I received an anonymous letter, and to this day I feel fully convinced that the sender wrote in absolute seriousness and in all earnestness. He had been, he said, about to sue his wife for divorce, and he had a few days previously telegraphed to New York City in order to have the matter 'fixed up' with the utmost despatch. But that evening—the previous evening—he had happened to attend our 'show,' where I had given the 'Old Dutch.' After hearing the ballad, he had relented, he said, and now he meant to go back to New York City and return to his wife 'right straight away'! In another city one of the leading dignitaries of the Church chose as the text for his Sunday's sermon some lines from the 'Old Dutch.' On the Monday night the house was crowded with clergymen! But look here," Chevalier said suddenly as he extracted an immense regalia from his enormous cigar-case, after the manner of one of Ouida's "principal boys,"—"look here, the motion of this boat is becoming too pronounced; let us move about." And we did. B. T.

THE SALVATION GIRL.

While rumour has it that some of our actor-managers are to be knighted, an actress has been righted, for Miss Ada Ward has become a Salvation-lass. Miss Ward has had a varied career. She has been

[illegible]

on the stage for twenty years, having played with Modjeska and as leading lady of the Theatre Royal, Melbourne. Indeed, she has been four times round the world in that time. She has also been twice married, divorcing her first husband in her seventeenth year; and she served as a nurse during the Siege of Paris, writing a magazine article about her experiences thereat. Recently she has been playing at Portsmouth as Lady Isabel in "East Lynne," and in "The Forger's Wife." But all that she has renounced. She called the members of the company around her on the stage when the curtain fell on Saturday night week, and informed them that she had renounced the sock and buskin for the tambourine. Then, distributing her dresses and jewels, she left the stage for the Army barracks, and addressed a crowded meeting on Sunday. She is quite frank about it all, and told the *Daily Mail* man about her transformation scene—

For the past four months I have been stopping in Portsmouth, preparing for a tour I had booked this season. During that time I occasionally went to the Salvation Army meetings, and the simple, earnest demeanour of the people there had always attracted me, but I did not go to the penitent-form entirely of my own volition. It was on the night of the 6th of last January I was in the meeting, when I felt something touch me. Thinking it was someone wanting to pass, I looked up with the intention of moving, when, right in front of me, I saw the figure of the Saviour as distinctly and plainly as I see you now. I got up and went to the penitent-

form. Something led me, and the feeling was such a peculiar one that I cannot describe it, but the presence has never left me.

THE GOLDEN GIRL.

Until we are taken into her presence Mr. Le Gallienne's Golden Girl (Lane) is one of the most charming damsels in fiction. She does not grow in our favour afterwards. Fortunately, she is not the only figure in the romance. There never was a book with so many heroines. Some are brunettes, others blonde; one is a housemaid, another the buxom daughter of a farmer; a demure barmaid has a not unattractive lease of the hero's versatile affections; and there are at least two daughters of joy, to one of whom, to our scandal, the hero was eventually wed. She was the Golden Girl. Our own preference would have been for Nicolette. Of her we shall speak immediately; meanwhile, it is desirable to explain how Mr. Le Gallienne had so many strings to his beau. That was through sheer cheek. Orlando was thirty, and unmarried; he had loved once, and wanted to love again; he had an ideal, beyond the dreams of music-halls; forth into the Surrey lanes he would take his walks to seek her. His first find was a petticoat, fluttering, among other newly washed garments, in a peasant's garden. Being of "exquisite cambric, edged with fine and expensive lace," that vestment, clearly, could not be indigenous to the bucolic soil. Orlando, therefore, learning that it had been left by a lady who had stayed at the cottage with a gentleman some little time before, bought it, found the name of Sylvia Joy stitched into it, and made Sylvia the object of his quest.

She was far off in unknown whereabouts for months; but night and the nightingales, the streams and the hills, were musical to the accompaniment of other dalliance. First, there was Nicolette. Orlando became acquainted with her in a very unsportsmanlike manner. He came upon her playing a trout, a fish which, weighing three pounds, and being only a foot long, must have been ungainlier than a hedgehog; he begged the trout's life from the angler, who consented on condition that he would lunch with her in a bower amid the trees near by. Rods, flies, trout, were all forgotten in the preparations of these twain to elope for an experimental fortnight. The better to avoid discovery, Nicolette went off attired as Rosalind was; Orlando, in his own pragmatism but pleasing self-sufficiency. This is how they fared at the inn to which their wanderings brought them at nightfall—

We found that the only accommodation the inn afforded was one double-bedded room. . . . We made the arrangement that Nicolette was to slip off to bed first, and then put out the light and go to sleep. However, when I followed her, having sat up as long as the landlady's patience would endure, I found that, though she had blown out the candle, she had forgotten to put out

the moon, which shone, as though it were St. Agnes' Eve, across half the room. I stole in very shyly, kept my eyes sternly from Nicolette's white bed, though, as I couldn't shut my ears, the sound of her breathing came to me with indescribable sweetness . . . I was suddenly startled by a little voice within the room saying, "I'm not asleep." "Well, you should be, you naughty child. Now shut your eyes and go to sleep, and fair dreams and sweet repose," I replied. "Won't you give me one little good-night kiss?" "I gave you one downstairs." "Is it very wicked to want another?" "There was not a foot between our two beds, so I bent over and took her soft white shoulders in my arms and kissed her. All the heaped-up sweetness of the whitest, freshest flowers of the spring seemed in my embrace as I kissed her, so soft, so fragrant so pure; and as the moonlight was the white fire in our blood. Softly I released her, stroked her brown hair, and turned again to my pillow. Presently the little voice was in the room again. "Mayn't I hold your hand? Somehow I feel lonely and frightened." So our hands made a bridge across which our dreams might pass through the night, and after a little while I knew she was asleep.

Thus far in the writing all is as it should be; but Mr. Le Gallienne must needs preach a bit. "As I lay thus holding her hand," he adds, "I realised once more . . . the purity of high passion. For indeed the moonlight that fell across her bosom was not whiter than my own thoughts, nor could any kiss—were it even such a kiss as Venus promised to the betrayer of Psyche—even in its fiercest delirium, be other than dross compared with the wild white peace of those silent hours when we lay thus married and maiden side by side." The white purity of Mr. Le Gallienne Orlando's high maidenhood should have been left to be taken for granted by such as were so disposed. Lothario flaunting the White Cross is a spectacle that can be pleasing in no other quarter than Exeter Hall what time Men Only assemble there in green-sick prurience.

At length, after many enlivening adventures, the hero meets the Golden Girl. He meets her in Piccadilly late at night. She is a faded daughter of joy, joyless and consumptive. Of course, therefore, Mr. Le Gallienne Orlando marries her; equally of course, just after the birth of their child, she dies. That was quite necessary in order that Mr. Le Gallienne Orlando might have opportunity to wallow in woe, admiring himself as in a looking-glass. This episode spoils the romance, and is, indeed, an outrage. If a man's dead wife was once a harlot, it is not for him, reverencing her memory, to publish the fact to the world. If she was not a harlot once, he should not say that she was, merely in order to give himself a chance of showing the debauchees of sentiment what orgies of emotion are possible to his noble soul. Still, while the last book is deplorable, "The Quest of the Golden Girl" is, in respect of the three other books, a refreshing and brilliant contribution to English literature. Almost every sentence is a gem, glittering with wayward wit; everything the writer touches, even every inanimate thing, throbs into rollicking merriment as he passes by. Mr. Le Gallienne is a woeful spectacle when he takes to moralising in serious mood; but at other times, which, happily, in this work are the more numerous, he is a very wizard of romance.

W. EARL HODGSON.



MISS ADA WARD, AS THE FORGER'S WIFE.
Photo by Pym, Streatham.

SMALL TALK.

Apropos of the recent celebration of Charles Lamb's birthday at the Urban Club, Mr. John Hollingshead writes me as follows—

The house in which Mary Lamb died, after surviving her devoted brother, Charles Lamb (who died in 1835), thirteen years, has been swept away with the bulk of Alpha Road by the new Sheffield Railway works. After Mary Lamb had murdered her mother in a fit of insanity, it became a question what was to be done with her. Her brother and friends came to the rescue to prevent her being imprisoned as a criminal lunatic. My two great-aunts—Miss Sarah James and Mrs. Parsons—as friends of the family, offered to be responsible for her safety and conduct, and Mrs. Parsons, who lived at 20, Alpha Road, the north-west side, about eight houses from the main road, fitted her up a comfortable room on the ground floor, with a French door-window opening into the orchard-garden, which, in the later 'thirties and 'forties, was full of Ribston Pippin apple-trees. This room was her sitting-room and library, every inch of the walls being filled with books, some of them presentation copies, in paper covers, from Wordsworth, Keats, Coleridge, Southey, John Clare, William Godwin, Tom Hood, and others, mixed with the folios and old dramatists which Charles Lamb had gleaned from many bookstalls. I spent many afternoons with the little, dreamy old lady, who often looked over me rather than at me, and tried my best to amuse her by playing a very irregular game of whist. Visitors sometimes came in, and I was allowed to watch them from a corner. William Godwin, Miss Kelly, Tom Hood, William Hazlitt, and many others, passed before my boyish eyes, and I am sorry to say I often left them to go out in the garden and feast myself on the apples. Sometimes, when Mary Lamb went to bed early in the back room on the first floor—the room in which she died—I used to leave the apples for the books, and amuse myself by reading the marginal notes which enriched them so largely.

The destructive fire that occurred in Warwick Square, Paternoster Row, on Saturday night week brought to light the fact that the destroyed

structure was once the stately quadrangle of the College of Physicians. It was built in 1674, and here it was that the Physicians met until 1825, when the collegiate body removed to a more modern edifice. The little portion of the college now remaining is but an empty shell, and can be seen only from the windows in the rear of the Cutlers' Hall, Warwick Lane, and those of Messrs. John Walker and Co., Warwick Square and Warwick Lane. It shows the three upper windows, with the finely proportioned pillars between them, their delicately chiselled capitals still in a wonderfully good state of preservation.



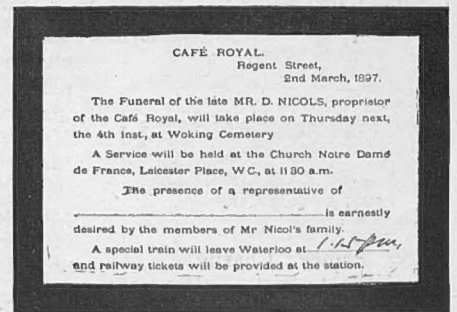
THE REMAINS OF THE COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS.
Photo by Mrs. John Walker.

England," by Dr. Yorke-Davies, in the current issue of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, which does not depart very much from its original lines. This home-made Mentone is Bexhill-on-Sea, which has many advantages over foreign resorts, notably the excellent sanitary condition of the place. Dr. Yorke-Davies, indeed, makes a general plea, for England is crammed with romance for the seeing eye. Bexhill-on-Sea has seen its full share of history, and to-day it occupies a high position among the resorts to which the jaded townsman flies to seek health and happiness.

The Spaniard is essentially barbaric, and his methods of warfare, as the revolutions in Cuba and the Philippines have shown, are brutally severe. Thus, after one defeat of the Philippine rebels the ringleaders were taken out and shot dead with their backs to the troops.

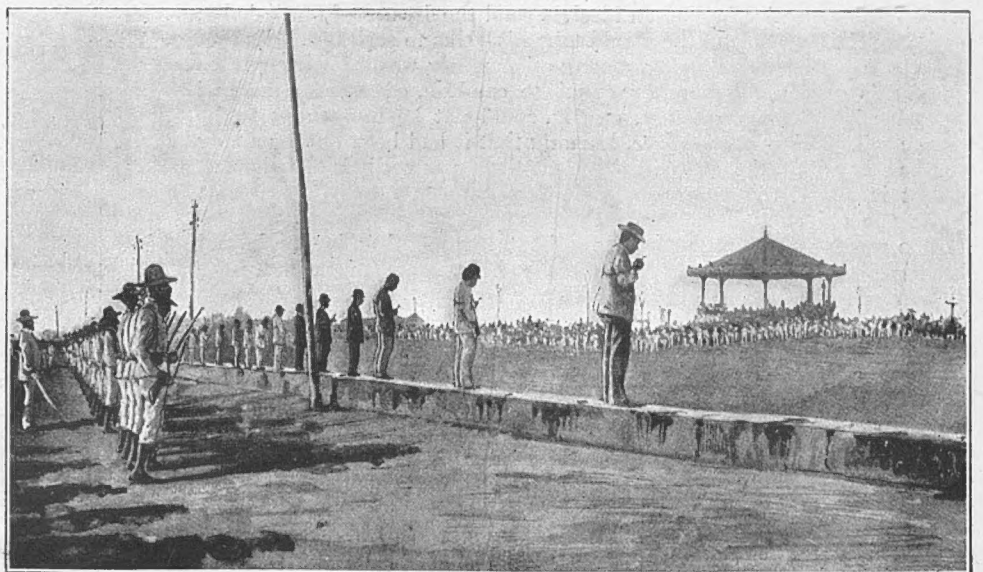
David Nicols is dead. The news has come with something akin to a shock to the little world of the Café Royal, the Empire Theatre, and the Italian quarter in London. He was a sour old man, and has left, perhaps, a million of money, but his friends were very few and far between. He came to London practically penniless, kept various small shops of scant repute, and was a familiar figure in the Courts of Bankruptcy. After many years, when his troubles with creditors had led, or were leading, to alterations in the Bankruptcy Laws, the luck changed. The Commune sent countless Parisians to London, they

flocked to the Café Royal, he became a rich man, and never looked back. He obtained a mortgage on the Empire in the days when Sir Richard Mansel was finding the money to pilot Kate Vaughan "Round the World in Eighty Days," foreclosed, and finally let the Empire to the company that makes such a fortune out of the house to-day. A box on the O.P. side was reserved exclusively for him, and there is a story that on one occasion he made a great disturbance because the box had been let in his absence to one of the Rothschilds. David Nicols lived at a beautiful place in Surbiton, where he was a large landowner, and his annual income must have run in the direction of six figures. His death may lead to considerable changes in the Empire Directorate, for he was the largest shareholder in the company, as well as the landlord, and I expect his solicitor and executor, Mr. Tyrell Lewis, will take the vacant seat on the Board.



Sir Robert Finlay grows in favour with the Leader of the House of Commons. He is always at Mr. Balfour's side during the tiresome discussions on the Voluntary Schools Bill, and when the sitting is over they may be seen leaving the House together. In Palace Yard, however, they usually separate. Sir Robert Finlay drives, while Mr. Balfour follows Mr. Gladstone's old practice and walks. In his walk the Leader of the House is accompanied sometimes by his brother, but more frequently by Mr. George Wyndham, whose name used to be appended to some of the smartest political letters ever dictated or inspired by a Chief Secretary for Ireland. If Sir Robert's friendship with Mr. Balfour did not begin on the golf-course, it was certainly cemented there. Both gentlemen are very keen players. The First Lord of the Treasury is no more eager to get to North Berwick than the Solicitor-General is to return to Nairn, where he has provided the golf club with a handsome pavilion and where his own house overlooks the links. During the Session they spend many a Saturday afternoon at Tooting or Wimbledon. Mr. Gerald Balfour is equally enthusiastic in his attachment to the game, and now and again one of their lady relatives walks over the Common in their company.

It is sometimes said that the Liberal-Unionists are disliked by the Conservatives. This is certainly not the case in Sir Robert Finlay's experience. Few men on the Treasury Bench are more popular among the Tories. Sir Robert has always been very resolute in his opposition to the Liberals who stood by Mr. Gladstone. In the Parliament of 1886, when both sections of Liberals still sat together on the Opposition side, the member for the Inverness Burghs was frequently found immediately behind Mr. Gladstone, to whom he caused excessive annoyance. Indeed, he never minced his opinion of his opponents. Hard in manner and contemptuous of waverers, he was particularly severe on sentimental politicians like Sir George Trevelyan. Yet it was from Sir George that he received his first Parliamentary compliment. On a Wednesday afternoon, eleven years ago, he made his maiden speech on a Church of Scotland Bill, and Sir George Trevelyan, calling him, "on short acquaintance," his honourable and learned friend, referred to his interest in religious matters and described him as a lawyer of eminence. It was in the same Session that Sir Robert Finlay delivered his great speech against the Home Rule Bill, a speech that is still memorable in the oasis of oratory on a stale subject. The reputation which he made then as a Parliamentary debater he has never surpassed.



SPANISH TROOPS SHOOTING REBELS IN THE PHILIPPINES.

The production of M. Coppée's "Les Jacobites" in New York, adapted under the name of "For Bonnie Prince Charlie," seems to have come apropos of a whole lot of things. In the first place, it recalls the article about history and stage which has been written for the current issue of the *Theatre* apropos of "Nelson's Enchantress," at the Avenue. The writer notes that the historical drama has flourished in France. Certain it is that no modern Englishman has written so fascinating a stage history as we get in "Madame Sans-Gêne," and for that matter in "Pour la Couronne." And now Coppée has turned to Prince Charlie, just as his countryman, M. Jussierand, has found inspiration in the life-story of James I. of Scotland for his "Romance of a King's Life," which Mr. Fisher Unwin recently published. What between Mr. Lang's "Pickle" and Coppée's play, Prince Charlie seems to have entered a new era of popularity.

The play deals with the luckless "'45." Two women, unconscious rivals, fall victims to the fascinations of the Pretender. The one, Lady Clanmorris, is the wife of one of the Prince's most faithful and powerful supporters; but she is willing to sacrifice not only her own but her husband's honour for the chance of future Court honours. The other, Mary Angus, is the granddaughter of a blind patriot, a simple Highland girl, who adores the Prince with the ardour and purity of a devotee. She renders as a spy invaluable services to "the cause," and for reward her royal lover gives her his own purse bearing the royal arms. Tidings are brought her that the Prince is known to be going to secretly meet an unknown woman, supposed to be the wife of one of his chieftains, and that several of his supporters intend to surprise the guilty couple and execute vengeance on them. Mary suspects that her rival is Lady Clanmorris, and resolves to warn her. She reaches the rendezvous, but not in time to entirely shield her foolish hero. The guilty wife escapes safely, and, as a last resource, Mary, showing the royal purse, confesses herself to be the Prince's mistress. In the most powerful scene of the play the girl is confronted with her blind grandfather, who curses her for the dishonour she has brought upon him. Another fine scene is that in which Clanmorris, at last aware of his leader's treachery, refuses to violate the laws of hospitality, and saves the royal fugitive's life. During the last act Mary Angus dies in the Pretender's arms, just before the latter leaves Scotland for ever.

Miss Julia Marlowe, who has been recently figuring as Romola, and who plays Mary Angus to her husband Mr. Robert Taber's blind patriot, was interviewed before the production of the play, and gave some interesting particulars as to the costuming of "For Bonnie Prince Charlie." The tartans were specially woven, and great pains were taken to have the old designs properly carried out. The Johnston, Cameron of Lochiel, Macduff, Murray of Atholl, and MacLaren tartans were all brought into requisition. Then, with a touch of realism which, perchance, was borrowed from the Théâtre Libre, everything was done

to make the costumes worn look as old, dusty, and, in some cases, travel-stained as possible, and throughout the whole play Mary Angus wears only one shabby little blue gown. Miss Marlowe, I may say, was born for the stage. She has all the qualities requisite to success. Her figure is graceful and her voice sweet. Her first appearance in New York was at the Bijou Theatre in October 1887, when she played Parthenia in "Ingomar." Her Juliet is very charming.

It is not surprising that a Frenchman should have dramatised Prince Charlie's career, for France has always been favourable to Scotland. This, or the popularity of the Kailyard school, seems to have revealed to the American belle the manifold charms and becoming qualities of tartans

and plaids. I suspect, however, that Paris, quite as much as Thrums, has brought about this state of things, for it is now many years since Frenchwomen discovered the beautifying powers of certain tartans. As is generally the case, *la belle Américaine* goes one better than her French sister, and an adaptation of what may be called the Highland dress is now actually to be seen at the establishment of one of the fashionable dress-makers of Fifth Avenue. The kilted skirt, which, of course, reaches far below the knee, is worn with a natty little black velvet Eton jacket; the belt is fastened by a cairngorm buckle, and a tartan silk waistcoat is worn under a plaid that is brought up, in the true Scots fashion, to the shoulder, and then falls shawl-wise over the back.

Gretna Green, it appears, is not extinct, after all, for at Lamberton Toll, which is situated about three and a-half miles from Berwick-on-Tweed, just over the boundary between England and Scotland, the functions of the Green seem to be still in vogue. The other week a young couple from the neighbourhood of Kelso sought the services of a well-known local character who has assumed the functions of "priest." The party set off for Lamberton Toll in a spring-cart about ten o'clock at night, accompanied by a number of friends, in whose presence the

ceremony was celebrated. The fee is now seven shillings and sixpence, which, with the romance thrown in, can hardly be considered exorbitant.

Speaking of the Border, I have read Mr. Francis Watt's article on "The Laws of the Marches," in the current issue of the *New Review*, with great interest. It is a capital summary of a subject that is very vaguely understood by most people. But Prince Charlie and Border laws and all that sort of romance are becoming prosaic in the light of progress. Thus Wednesday saw the cutting of the first sod of a railway that is to connect Spean Bridge, near Fort William, and Fort Augustus, passing through the country which was a hotbed of Jacobitism. Within easy reach of it is Auchnacarry, the seat of Lochiel, near which still stand the ivy-clad ruins of the old fortalice which was burned by Cumberland after Culloden. Prince Charlie would be very much astonished if he could see the Heart of the Highlands to-day.

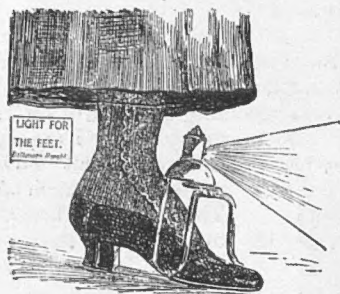


MISS JULIA MARLOWE.

Photo by Falk, New York.

The students of Dublin University have started a Dramatic Club, and got Sir Henry Irving as president.

The very latest invention is one that makes walking "the dark places" of the earth as easy and pleasurable as crossing Niagara on a rope was to the late Chevalier Blondin. It is an exact fulfilment of the Scripture about "a lamp unto the path," for it is to be carried on the feet. A tiny glass lantern, mounted on a sort of stirrup that straddles the toe of the boot, shows the wearer where to place his foot. A tiny storage battery furnishes the light. This is carried in the pocket, and a flexible chamois-covered wire passes down to the lamp inside one's unmentionables. Storage batteries in one's pocket, and wires given to winding about one's legs—well, I don't think the game is worth the candle.



From the "New York World."

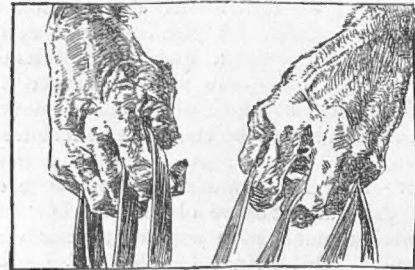
The task of getting rid of snow on the streets has been solved by a New York engineer. His machine, which is called a "snow-melter," is drawn up beside a sewer-opening. Men shovel the snow into an iron tank, through which constant jets of steam are passed from a boiler fitted behind the tank. The snow is thus converted into water, and runs off into the gutter. This is much more expeditious, as well as cheaper, than the old method of carting the snow away, and it has none of the obvious disadvantages of melting by a salt solution. The exact cost of melting, after the initial expense of the machine has been cleared, and that is only about sixty pounds, is about fivepence-halfpenny to sevenpence per cubic yard of snow, the absolute cost per hour being only about eight shillings. One of these "snow-melters" has been in active use in New York during the past winter, and has been a success.

Those on the look-out for a new outdoor game might turn their attention to the Indian Choctaw form of lacrosse. It is a splendid form of exercise, but requires a good deal of ground, for the goal-posts are about two hundred yards apart. The balls used are not unlike golf-balls, and are made of rags and covered with white buckskin. Even the Indian women take a very vigorous part in the game, which is regularly played at native tournaments. The New Woman is an unknown quantity among the Choctaws; but, although the feminine players are not permitted to touch the ball-sticks, they are armed with a small whip with which they strike the players when they think they are not working hard enough. Also it is the women's privilege to give hot coffee to the men while the game is in progress. Each racquet terminates in a small hoop in the form of a spoon, laced at the bottom with deerskin. There is no doubt that the game of lacrosse is an adaptation of the Indian ball-game, taken to France by some of the early Louisiana settlers.

In these days, when monkeys are pushing their way into the kingdom of humanity, one is glad to know that they have some physical deficiencies that debar them from assuming some parts in man's higher life. For instance, for lack of a decently proportioned thumb, a monkey is utterly incapable of giving "the Mason's grip," and without it there is no getting inside a "Lodge" for them. I don't know that monkeys ever shake hands—they prefer rather to rub noses; but, if they did, they should certainly follow the most fashionable, up-to-date manner of touching finger-tips. Owing to their weak thumbs, they could never give a proper, hearty, revival-meeting hand-shake. We are here by virtue of our thumbs, and monkeys will remain where they are because they have not got them. But, as may be seen from the illustration, there is some hope of the ape donning the livery of a Jehu, for his hands are just the things to clasp "the ribbons." At birth, a baby monkey runs its fingers and toes through the hair of its mother's breast and clings on for hours, even when its parent is in bounding flight. The hair is clasped mechanically between the fingers as between the teeth of a comb, and anyone who has allowed a young baby to run its fingers through his hair or beard will have recognised how far this peculiar method of clinging

has persisted in beings who are beyond the pale of "Simianity." The ape never grasps anything in the palm between the thumb and fingers, but between the fingers, as shown in the accompanying illustration, or clutches it between the fingers and palm.

At the Crystal Palace the Saturday Afternoon Concerts have been resumed, and the opening performance, in celebration of the Schubert



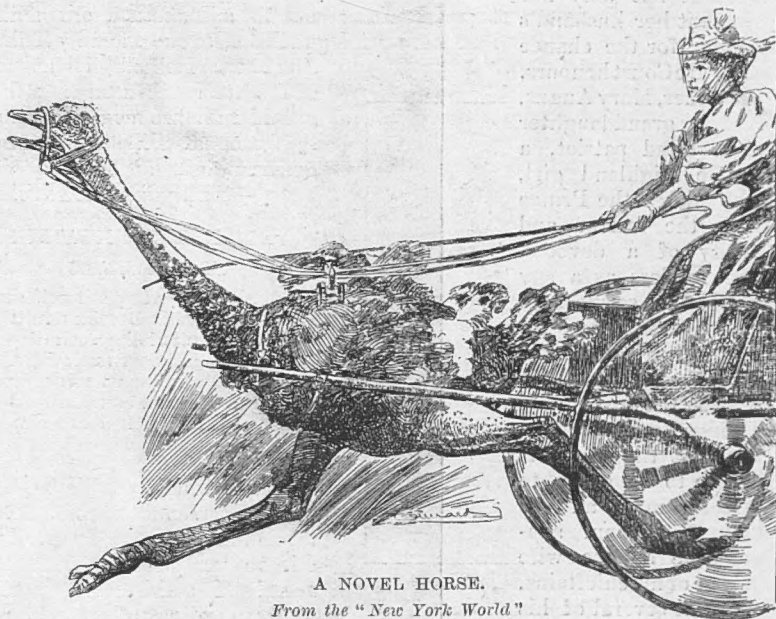
A MONKEY'S GRIP.

From the "New York World."

anniversary, was attended by a large audience. Needless to say, the music received an interpretation that would have roused the enthusiasm of the composer himself. Next week the Polish pianist Paderewski will be the special attraction, and for days past there has been a steady demand for seats for the great occasion. I expect there will be an attendance similar to the one when Sarasate played in the autumn of

last year. Then even standing-room was at a healthy premium. The Saturday Concerts will continue till the end of April, when the arrangements for the Great Victorian Era Loan Exhibition will be completed. Meanwhile, the special series of lectures arranged to teach the public the full significance of the sights are proceeding apace on Wednesday evenings at eight o'clock. I am told that at Mr. Henry Lucy's lecture on "Parliament During the Queen's Reign" Sir William Harcourt has promised to preside. Visitors to Sydenham during the summer months will find that the beautiful grounds of the Palace are being used to the greatest possible advantage. There will be all sorts and conditions of entertainment, of which I am forbidden to write at the moment, but I may hint that the delightful *al fresco* ballets will be resumed. Apart from this, the Services will claim much time and attention from the public, and in these perturbed times, when scares come three times a-day, it will be well and advisable for the man in the street to know something of the means by which his Government hopes to avoid danger and leave him to enjoy his little feed of corn in peace. Altogether the present will be a great year in the annals of the Crystal Palace.

In a fairy-story that was the delight of my childhood, the hero, Tim Pippin, made most wondrous cuts across country on the back of an ostrich. Mrs. John Elditch, of Denver, Colorado, must be something of a fairy, for, when she wants "a change from driving horses," she yokes an ostrich to a light vehicle with pneumatic tyres—and, like Yankees generally, goes ahead. She guides him with a long whip, for if the reins were tugged his neck would break. Mrs. Elditch remarked to an interviewer that "ostriches don't drive like horses" (horses "drive" in the American language), for this particular pet will stop "in his



A NOVEL HORSE.

From the "New York World."

fastest gait and dive sideways" for a bit of orange-peel or a banana-skin. Besides the ostrich, Mrs. Elditch has a whole zoological garden on her private estate, the only specimens unrepresented being the giraffe and the hippopotamus. She visited New York recently for the purpose of buying a hippo.; but, as she remarked, "buying a 'hip,' however, isn't buying a French bonnet, you know." How the great pachyderm must resent being called a "hip."—"Hippy snorteth," to vary George Meredith's parody.

"Get the name of an early riser and you may lie until even." Get the name of a novelist and your theology will pass for fiction. Last week the *Westminster Gazette* quoted (uncorrected) a comical blunder regarding the great tear-drawer of the "Kailyard." In giving some extracts from an interview in the *Johannesburg Weekly Times* with Mr. James Dalling, of Juta and Co., the well-known bookselling firm, the *W.G.* quoted as follows—

Asked what class of books were mostly read on the Rand, he (Mr. Dalling) replied—

"Oh, novels, of course. Marie Corelli . . . Crawford . . . Crockett, Besant's new book . . . 'The Mind and (sic) the Master,' by Ian Maclaren (John Watson), 'The Sign of the Cross' . . . 'The Murder of Delicia,' and 'Tom Sawyer' . . . are at present the most popular recent arrivals."

It is hardly necessary to emphasise the italics (which are ours) by the remark that "the Mind of (not 'and') the Master" is Dr. Watson's theological treatise, which met with some pretty sharp controversial criticism. In the questionable dialect of the "Kailyard," "some fowk thoct he wisna a'thegither soond." Whatever Dr. Watson's theology may be, his fiction, of course, is altogether "soond" and unworldly. It is even theological. Hence, perhaps, the Rand bookseller's blunder. Conversely, his "Body of Divinity" may include Wilson Barrett's story.

Referring to the recent actions with regard to the right of quotation from published works, I might note that the "privilege" of a book printed at Paris in 1679 prohibits not only the unauthorised printing, sale, or distribution of the said book, but also "the making from it of any extracts or abridgments." Critics in those days generally published their reviews in book or pamphlet form, and at their own expense.

If marriage is not so popular as it once was, it is not for lack of novelty in the way that the spider bids the fly walk into its parlour. Last week I illustrated the manner in which Mdlle. Emily Pappacena invited M. de Gasperi to go to church with her, and now here is a picture of a wedding that took place in a lion's den, when Mr. W. F. Winschermann, the trainer to Mr. Frank Fillis, the Sanger of South Africa, entered the holy bonds of matrimony with Miss Malraison in the presence of six thousand people. I take it kindly that this stalwart Teuton has favoured me with this startling picture, for his feelings have been very much hurt by a little article on lion-taming that recently appeared in these pages. He protests as follows—

Your version of lion-taming may have been in practice forty or fifty years ago; certainly not now. These last ten years we have had a more scientific way of taming and training animals, and let me remark here that there is no hard usage in their youth, as you say. No, sir; it takes great care to bring up young animals, and I spare no kindness in their time of training, but never use the whip. The animal will take a dislike to the trainer, and all chances of teaching him tricks are gone. Patience and kindness in animal training go always the furthest; cruelty is out of the question altogether. Of course, the whip is required at times, just as the schoolmaster must use his rod to correct. As for full stomachs, if you only knew how dangerous it is to the trainer in performing with his animals, you would never make that assertion in your esteemed paper.

very fond of me, and all for treating him the proper way and being kind to him. I can do just with him what I like. I could give you many more instances about the treatment of wild animals and the gratitude they will show to their trainer." My correspondent encloses the report of a meeting of the Cape Town Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, in which a member is reported to have "rendered a great service to the aims of the society by inviting a large number of children to visit a performance at Fillis's Circus, where they found a good object-lesson in training animals by kindness."

Apropos of this ever-recurring question of cruelty to animals, I turn to the report of the Society for the Protection of Birds to find some curious facts. Even those who are not in any special sense bird-lovers will be startled to hear that little by little the lark and the lapwing are becoming distinctly rarer, and will in time be as extinct as is the dodo. Lord Winchelsea very properly refuses to regard Shelley's aerial friend as a part of British produce, and his association declines to supply larks to its customers. The merry lapwing, or green plover, is, unfortunately, also vanishing. The peewit is the only wild bird of which omnivorous man eats both the eggs and the adults; and this is not only not fair play, but is besides a most wasteful and senseless proceeding.



MARRIAGE OF MR. WINSCHERMANN AND MISS MALRAISON IN A LIONS' CAGE AT JOHANNESBURG.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVIES BROTHERS, JOHANNESBURG.

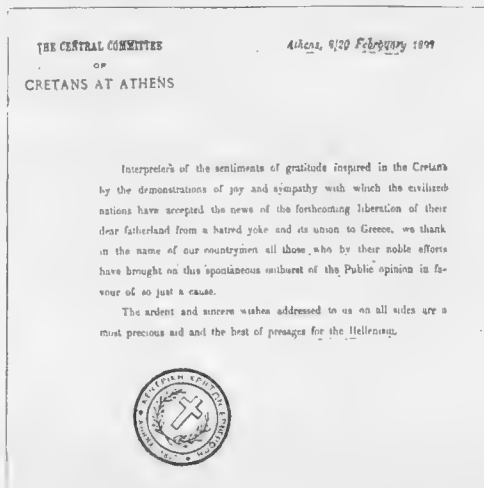
Overfeeding is absolutely the worst thing for performing animals. In the photo you publish, the lions look very much cowed there is no doubt, but I can assure you it is no terror. They like me, and are always glad to see me. At the same time, they know that I am their master. The work those animals do would surprise you. It took several years of hard and patient labour to bring them to their present perfection. Now, one word about accidents to trainers. I have been four years with Mr. Fillis, and at present perform with five different groups of lions, tigers, and bears, and do the most astounding things with them. One group of two Bengal tigers, a goat, and a boarhound is really marvellous. I carry a full-grown Bengal tiger on my shoulder right across the ring, harness two Bengal tigers in a chariot and drive them around the arena. Those things must be seen to believe them, and, my dear sir, I never use the whip on them; if I did, it would not be good for me. That is where many a trainer makes his mistake, in being brutal, and that is where most of them get hurt. To sum up in one word, intemperance and brutality have been the cause of most accidents where trainers have been killed or severely wounded, and always will be.

Mr. Winschermann, who heads his note-paper with vignettied heads of a fierce-looking lion and a tiger, also sends me a photograph of his "pet lion" Pacha, a noble-looking brute with a very bad record. He has maimed no fewer than four trainers. "The last one would never enter the cage unless he was in liquor" (I am not quite sure to which of the two the pronoun refers), "and then ill-treat the animal, till one night he got his deserts. That very same animal is now my pet, and is really

The Society for the Protection of Birds is strictly neutral on the killing of game birds and what may be styled legitimate sport.

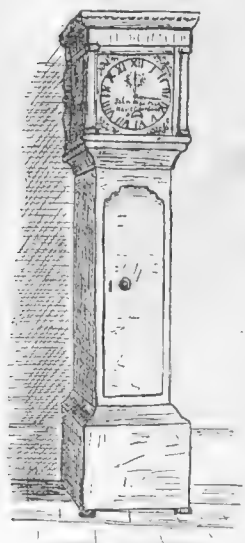
The other evening I paid my annual visit to the "Langham Smoker," the soirée of the Langham Sketching Club. In this case the word "soirée" is not used in the Dickensian sense, but means pictures, variety entertainment, and beer, bread, cheese, and celery, to say nothing of whisky for those who know where to look for it. Ladies were not admitted, which is fortunate—for them—seeing that the place was absolutely crowded with artists, critics, and entertainers. The club still maintains a friendly hold on the members whom it served when they were obscure, and who serve it now they have made their way. A noticeable feature was the exhibit of Mr. J. T. Manuel, whose works, a little too daring and eccentric, have a curious fascination, due to real art quality. Mr. Sime, whose bogie drawings in *Pick-Me-Up* are some of the strangest, cleverest pieces of modern black-and-white, is represented very effectively by a powerful picture of a prize-fight. There was a capital collection of characteristic Dudley Hardys, which had taken the attention of those who go to the "Smoker" with money in their pockets, while Mr. George Haité, Mr. Brakespeare, Mr. Almond, and others, contributed handsomely to a very interesting collection.

It would almost have seemed, from certain recent Parliamentary elections, that there was a reaction of Liberalism in London, but the journals of the day give no indication of the fact. Only four London papers can be said to have consistently supported the Greek position—the *Spectator*, the *Daily Chronicle*, the *Star*, and *Truth*; whereas the *Times*, the *Standard*, the *Daily Telegraph*, the *Daily Mail*, the *Daily News*, and the London evening newspapers other than the *Star*, are unsympathetic towards Greece. The *Daily News*, indeed, is less sympathetic than the *Standard*. At the risk of being told that I know nothing about politics—and I glory in the fact—I must candidly confess that I should very much like to see Greece come triumphantly out of the corner into which the Great Powers are driving her. This, I believe, is the general feeling in the country, not even excluding the Carlton Club. I give herewith a reproduction of a little circular which has been sent to me from Athens.



THE GRATEFUL CRETANS.

The little town of Fishguard has been *en fête*. Processions, bands, illuminations, the usual outward forms of joy, took possession of the place. A crowd assembled in the Market-place. Just opposite is the



THE CLOCK, SHOWING BULLET-HOLE.

Royal Oak, where the Council of War was held by Lords Milford and Cawdor, Colonel Knox, and other gentlemen, a hundred years ago, when fourteen hundred French troops landed at a creek to the west of Goodwick (on Feb. 22, 1797), the three frigates which had brought them sailing away next day. The invaders surrendered to Lord Cawdor and a force of seven hundred men, piling their arms on Goodwick Sands. A large procession went from Fishguard to the scene of the surrender. Medals were distributed, the obverse of which I reproduce, while on the other side ran the legend: "1897. Centenary of the Last Foreign Invasion of Britain, 1797. In Commemoration of the Surrender of the French on Carreg Wastad Point, Penger, February 24, 1797." Relics and trophies were displayed, and, among other patriotic songs, a hymn of thanksgiving was sung—the same that was written by Jones Llangan and sung on those sands a hundred years ago. The clock fired into by a Frenchman—with the idea, probably, that a man was hiding inside it—stands in the same place still; cottages and people change little in this far corner of the West. All the children in the district were given a substantial tea, to

impress them with feelings of patriotism; and so, with illuminations and bonfires, ended the Fishguard Centenary—at least, the one on the actual day. It is proposed to have a larger demonstration, with women in the Welsh costume, on July 3.

"Advance Australia!" indeed. Well, in the matter of things matrimonial, to judge from the following advertisement, culled from the Melbourne *Argus*, that city, at any rate, is considerably in advance of the Mother Country.

MATRIMONY.

MARRIAGES CELEBRATED by Ordained Clergymen (with due solemnity), in strictest privacy, at HOLT'S MATRIMONIAL AGENCY, 422, Queen Street, Melbourne, opposite the Old Cemetery, or elsewhere, from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily, Saturday included (no notice required). Fee, 10s. 6d.; or marriage with guaranteed gold wedding-ring and necessary witnesses provided, £1 1s. P.S.—No other charges whatever.

Mark the "due solemnity" and yet "strictest privacy" with which the ordained clergymen of the Antipodes are willing to tie the nuptial knot, between ten a.m. and nine p.m., for the modest solatium of half-a-guinea. What an advantage, too, in the avoidance of all fuss, bustle, and family interference, is suggested by that accommodating parenthesised announcement "no notice required." You have



FISHGUARD MEDAL.

only to persuade your fair, while perhaps taking a constitutional, that marriage is not a failure, and in you pop and are spliced in a twinkling. It seems as easy as afternoon-tea at the Army and Navy Stores! You have no occasion, either, to trouble about the ring, for that (made of guaranteed gold) can be provided, with the necessary witnesses of the ceremony, for another half-guinea! It seems a charming arrangement, and the only shadow on the cheerfulness and comfort of the whole proceeding is the situation of the Agency, "opposite the old cemetery." It is a pity that a more joyful situation could not have been chosen. Perchance, however, the proprietor, mindful of the skeleton at the Egyptian feast, thinks that this reminder of the uncertainty of life may be salutary for his patients.

An extraordinary credulity seems to haunt the theatrical atmosphere. I have been solemnly assured that Sir Henry Irving is going out of his mind, that his accident was a myth designed to cover the withdrawal of "Richard III." after the first performance of the revival, that Miss Ellen Terry is about to leave the Lyceum. I have watched Sir Henry with great care, both in public and private, without discovering any signs of mental derangement. Certainly, to withdraw a piece which has cost thousands, on the plea that the first night was unsatisfactory, and then to make-believe for ten weeks to have an injured leg, would be strong presumptive evidence of insanity. If there is any craziness abroad, it is in the heads of people who swallow such rubbish. As for Miss Terry, her secession from the Lyceum has been invented so often that all the sham mystery of heedless paragraphs cannot give a spice of freshness to its stale antiquity.

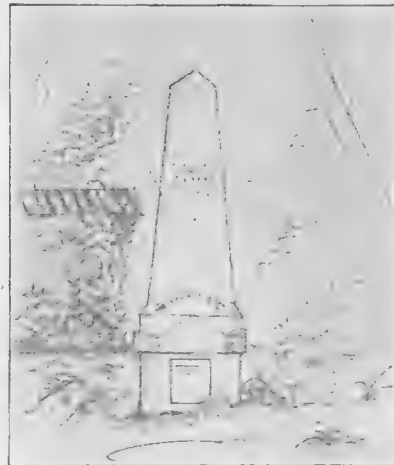
The battle of changes in the Guards reminds me of the commotion which the introduction of the territorial system caused. Thus, the 75th Regiment, once the Stirlingshire, was made the 1st Battalion of the Gordon Highlanders (the 92nd), and put into the kilt. The fact is commemorated at Malta, where an obelisk ten feet high was erected on the occasion, with the following lines—

EPITAPH ON THE 75TH.

30th June, 1881.

Here lies the poor old 75th,
But, under God's protection,
They'll rise again in kilt and hose—
A glorious resurrection.
For, by the transformative powers
Of Parliamentary laws,
They go to bed the 75th
And rise the Ninety-twas.

The obelisk, which is cleverly cut in Malta stone, was erected by letter "B," or Major J. O. M. Vandeleur's, Company of the 75th (Stirlingshire) Regiment of Foot, and occupies a position in the pretty gardens of Sa. Mason, at the rear of Floriana Barracks, where the regiment was stationed at the time its title was altered. The sketch is by Mr. Hamilton Sharpe, of Malta.



And this very 75th, as transformed into the 1st Battalion of the Gordons, has just distinguished itself by becoming the first regiment abroad to secure the Queen's Cup, which is presented by her Majesty to the Army Rifle Association, and is shot for every year by teams of Infantry regiments and Engineers whether at home or abroad. The shooting took place at Gharial, in the Punjab, on Oct. 9, and some very high scores were made. The following are the names of the team, of which an unusually excellent photograph has been sent me and appears on the opposite page:

	200 Yds.	500 Yds.	600 Yds.	Total.
Lieutenant Wingate ...	31	34	35	100
Lance-Corporal Chapman ...	32	32	33	97
Sergeant Bell ...	32	33	30	95
Corporal Pirie ...	34	33	28	95
Lance-Corporal Molloy ...	31	32	31	94
Lieutenant W. E. Gordon ...	31	30	29	90
Corporal Cooper ...	30	28	31	89
Lieutenant Tytler ...	30	29	29	88

Mr. William Rice has sent me a copy of his "Lingua Obscura: a New Syllabic System of Cryptography." I do not profess to understand the system, and the business of an editor renders him more anxious that people should make themselves intelligible than that they should practise new devices in obscurity. Mr. Rice has addressed to me a note marked "private and confidential"—quite a needless precaution, seeing that he has composed his missive in his cryptic "lingua." How can I betray his confidence when he calls me "Osby Wang"? The only familiar words in this communication are "Anak" and "Kino," and yet I do not suppose they have the smallest reference either to an ancient giant or to an illustrious clothier. I am quite willing to believe that Mr. Rice's cryptograms "would defy any attempt at solution by the most practised expert." (I take this from the "prefatory note," which, thank heaven, is in plain prose!) That the system "should, at least, supply a novel and instructive pastime" is happily obvious.

Mr. Alfred Harmsworth has just returned from a trip to India, looking all the better for his holiday. He comes back full of new projects, and we may certainly expect his much-talked-of magazine within the year. Of course, Mr. Harmsworth has been making careful investigations into the journalistic outlook of India, and I am glad to be informed by him that he found *The Sketch* more in evidence than any other weekly.

The *Bookman* for March has reopened the question of the mutilation of the review copies of books which publishers send to editors. I am glad to learn from this that the following publishers entirely repudiate the practice of stamping books—

Messrs. Longman and Co.
Messrs. J. M. Dent and Co.
Mr. John Lane.
Messrs. A. and C. Black.
Messrs. A. D. Innes and Co.

Messrs. Chatto and Windus.
Messrs. Kegan Paul and Co.
Mr. Walter Scott.
Messrs. Isbister and Co.
Mr. George Allen.

Mr. George Allen and Mr. John Lane object to the defacement of books on the only possible ground of objection—that of æsthetics. Mr. John Lane, indeed, says that he objects to the practice strongly, “and to any other wanton defacement of a book.” One awaits with

who is the editor who bespatters Mr. Heinemann's boots by talking about his “courtesy” in the matter of sending books, and refers to “looking gift-horses in the mouth.” That editor is obviously a very silly person. It cannot be said too often that a book sent for review is not a gift-horse. I am fully conscious that when Mr. Heinemann sends me a book and I review it, either in the column devoted to the “Literary Lounger” or as “The Book and its Story,” I am giving that astute publisher a great deal more than he is giving me. If he likes to make inquiries, he will find that no paper is more widely distributed than *The Sketch* throughout the whole English-speaking world. It is not a “courtesy” but an insult to send me a stamped copy of a book.

The end of the hunting season will come early this year, as is always the case after such an open winter. There are many good reasons for cutting an “open season” short. In the first place, the farmers' interests require it, the crops being more advanced than in springs following hard winters; then the stable will not stand the strain of long-continued work unrelieved by the spell of frost at which everybody, as in duty bound, grumbles, but which, as a matter of fact, is not wholly unwelcome to owners of small studs, if it be not too long maintained. Flood rather than frost has intervened to give hunters a rest this season; if I am not mistaken, the Quorn, to name one pack, had

Lance-Corpl. Molloy.

Co-pl. Pirie.

Lieut. Tytler.

Lieut. Gordon.

Sergeant Bell.

Lieut. Wingate.



Lance-Corpl. Chapman.

WINNERS OF THE QUEEN'S CUP.

Corpl. Cooper.

curiosity some new move by Messrs. Blackwood and Sons, who write to the *Bookman*: “We have in contemplation the adoption of another plan, which, we think, will meet with the approval of those who value a book for its own sake.” Mr. Heinemann and Messrs. Macmillan seem to be the only obdurate firms. Messrs. Macmillan and Co. argue, plausibly enough, that they stamp their books “because it is the practice of the conductors of some periodicals to sell such volumes almost as soon as they come into their hands. Unless review copies were ear-marked in this fashion, it would be difficult for a bookseller to explain why he asked half-a-sovereign for one copy of a new book when his neighbour in the back street was offering another copy of the same edition of the same book for half-a-crown. If a book bears on its title-page evidence that it is a presentation copy, its abnormal cheapness is easily accounted for.” To which I have only to reply that Messrs. Macmillan and Co. might get over the difficulty by stamping the books of those newspapers which are known to sell their copies. It is scarcely worth while for so successful a firm as they are to wantonly hurt the feelings of a number of reviewers, who, after all, do more or less—whatever may be said to the contrary—hold in their hands the destinies of authors.

Mr. William Heinemann is the most pugilistic of all the publishers; he has been fighting authors' agents long enough, and now he wants a fight with the journalists. It would be interesting, however, to know

to abandon more fixtures owing to the waterlogged state of the country than they were compelled to do by frost. Flood, when it comes, is really a worse enemy to fox-hunting than is frost, as the effects are so much more lasting.

The air is thick with commemorative efforts. One can't take up a paper without seeing that the people are gathering together somewhere to consider what form they shall give their expression of regard for the Throne. It did not occur to me that fox-hunting was a sufficiently conglomerate interest to feel itself called upon to do anything in the commemorative way, but Mr. Barthropp, Master of the Suffolk, has hit upon a rather happy idea. He proposes, if he can raise the funds required, to establish a “Queen's Covert,” where pheasants and foxes shall dwell in amity for the benefit respectively of the farmers over whose lands the Suffolk ride, and for the Hunt. The idea is a good one, but a day's shooting won't go far to soothe the agricultural breast wrung by the sight of “spoiled roots,” damaged fences, and the like. More practical, though not a commemorative effort, was the resolution passed a week or two ago by the members of the Cheshire Hunt, namely, that all supplies of forage and corn shall, as far as possible, be purchased from farmers occupying land within the Hunt. There we have the appeal direct to the agricultural pocket. The certainty of finding a good market on the spot for his produce will really do something to soften the farmer's heart towards hounds.

Accidents on the stage seem to occur in cycles. The fatality at the Novelty is still fresh in our memories. The death of M. Castlemary on the stage at New York is a thing of yesterday. The latest victim has been Mr. T. B. Thalberg, who, while figuring as Rudolph in "The Prisoner of Zenda," at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith, met with a nasty accident. One night the property dagger was broken, and on the second another

was substituted which failed to work, and a rather serious stab in the thigh was the result. Though Mr. Thalberg insisted on continuing his part to the end of that performance, he was compelled to rest for some days.



MR. T. B. THALBERG.

Photo by Chancellor, Dublin.

Mr. Thalberg, I may note, was born at Aylburton, in Gloucestershire, in 1864, and is the youngest son of Mr. James Fletcher Corbett, and a godson of the great pianist Sigismund Thalberg, at whose special request he adopted his Christian name for his *nom de théâtre*. He was originally educated for the Bar, but in 1881 decided to follow his own inclinations and go on the stage. During a long provincial apprenticeship he fulfilled engagements with Miss Rosé Leclercq, Mr. T. C. King, D. H. Hoskins, Miss Fortescue,

Mr. F. R. Benson, and also played in various stock companies at Glasgow, Manchester, and Torquay. In 1890 he made his first appearance in London to undertake the rôle of Charles Surface at the Vaudeville, after which he appeared also in "Clarissa" and "The Bride of Eros," in which pieces Mr. Buchanan cast him for Lovelace and Eros respectively, and the following year was spent at the Adelphi as the priest in "The English Rose."

At the close of the run of that piece, Mr. Thalberg was persuaded to visit America as Madame Modjeska's leading man, and during his association with the great Polish actress he played Benedick, Orlando, Angelo, Leonatus Posthumus, Macduff, Armand Duval, Maurice de Saxe, Don Caesar, and many other parts. On his return to London he filled a few tentative engagements, and, in 1893, again sailed for America for the title-rôle in the poetic drama "Olaf," which ran for five months in New York. Since that time Mr. Thalberg has devoted his attention almost entirely to the provinces, where he has toured with his own company in "The Professor's Love Story" with most gratifying results, and as the lovelorn old Professor won all hearts. He has also played in "The Profligate," "Diplomacy," and "The Lady of Lyons," as well as having written and produced a musical farcical comedy, "A Close Shave," during a very successful engagement at Oxford.

I confess I feel curiosity with regard to Miss Ada Rehan's latest rôle, her assumption of Meg Merrilies in Mr. Augustin Daly's new version of "Guy Mannering." Miss Rehan ought to give a fine performance of Scott's character. She has lately been appearing with success as Mrs. Posket in a revival of "The Magistrate." A former member of Mr. Daly's "company of comedians," Miss Isabelle Irving, has been pleasing American audiences as Princess Flavia in "The Prisoner of Zenda."

"The Star-Spangled Dollar" is the piquant title of a new American comic opera whose production is announced.

As I recently saw "The Prodigal Father" at the Strand, I was interested to come across an account of the performance of the same piece in San Francisco. The company includes a star dancer, and a great deal of speciality business is introduced, the result being an amusing amalgam of farcical comedy and variety turns.

I am not given to constructing puzzles, but the dinner-party given by the Duke of Fife on Sunday

week to Mr. George Alexander, Mr. Tree, Mr. Toole, Mr. Wyndham, and Sir Henry Irving, to meet the Prince of Wales, compels me to picture the actor-managers of London (on the opposite page), for the irrepressible paragraphist has it that "knighthoods are to be offered to those of the Duke's party who are yet untitled." He adds that he has reason to believe that Mr. Clement Scott is also to be offered a knighthood. The Prince has always favoured the players, and the bare possibilities suggested by this mysterious paragraph are boundless. But where is my Marcus? If Clement is to be made a Sir, what about his old friend Dick Phenyl (Mr. Edward Terry)? But only rhyme can carry off my fancy—

"Oh, who would be a goodly knight?"

Exclaimed his Royal Highness;

Four actors came, in black bedight,

Without the slightest shyness.

"I can't make dukes or lords," said he,

"Though ladies put the gilt on"—

Of course, he spoke of Lady C.,

Who once was plain Miss Bilton.

"My nobles once received with gorge

The lovely Countess Connie,

So Aubrey Tanq. will be Sir George,

And Mr. Toole Sir Johnnie.

If patents only were as free

As yet I hope they will be,

I think," he said to Beerbohm Tree,

"I'd make you Duke of Trilby."

Oh, that will be a famous day

Our Empress diadem

Lifts up her queenly voice to say

(In audience), "Rise, Sir Clemmy";

For then it won't be worth his while

To slay the Ibsen marcher—

Sir Clement could afford to smile

On simple Mister Archer.

If mummers get no coronet,

The future may embark us

With Barrett indexed in "Debrett"

And "Burke" as "Marquis Marcus";

And D'Oyly Carte might be a Bart

What time our only hero

Who calls on us to praise his art

Was known as Prince Pinero.

And one might meet amid the nob's,

At Drawing-Room or beano,

Sir Arthur Roberts linked with Bobs

And also Baron Leno.

Ah me! upon that happy morn

When peers and players gambol

A clansman would be found by Lorne

In brave Sir Herbert Campbell!

"Jim the Penman" was revived by the Beckenham Amateur Dramatic Club on Saturday week, and proved a success. Ralston was represented by Mr. Branwell, and Mrs. Ralston by Mrs. Frank Sturges. Mr. Arthur Thomas was Baron Hartfeld, Mr. John Aste junior was Captain Redwood, and Mr. F. Hudson was Mr. Chapstone, Q.C.



"JIM THE PENMAN," AS PRODUCED BY THE BECKENHAM DRAMATIC CLUB.

THE ACTOR-MANAGERS OF LONDON.

WHICH OF THEM IS TO BE KNIGHTED?



MR. GEORGE ALEXANDER (ST. JAMES'S).
Photo by Ellis, Upper Baker Street, N.W.



MR. ARTHUR ROBERTS (PRINCE OF WALES'S).
Photo by Ellis, Upper Baker Street, N.W.



MR. W.-S. PENLEY (THE GLOBE).
Photo by Ellis, Upper Baker Street, N.W.



MR. BEERBOHM TREE (HER MAJESTY'S).
Photo by Mendelssohn, Pembridge Crescent, W.



MR. CHARLES WYNDHAM (THE CRITERION).
Photo by Barrauds, Oxford Street, W.



MR. WILSON BARRETT (THE LYRIC).
Photo by Barrauds, Oxford Street, W.



MR. CHARLES HAWTREY (THE COMEDY).
Photo by Ellis, Upper Baker Street, N.W.



MR. EDWARD TERRY (TERRY'S).
Photo by Ellis, Upper Baker Street, N.W.



MR. CYRIL MAUDE (THE HAYMARKET).
Photo by Ellis, Upper Baker Street, N.W.

Champion Dominie, the winner of the Stud Dog and Breeders' prize at Cruft's great show recently, was one of the oldest dogs exhibited there. He first saw the light about ten years ago, having been born on the last day of July 1887. He is by Pitcher and Vene, and was bred by Mr. Twyford. He was claimed by his present owner, Mr. Francis Redmond, for one hundred guineas when a puppy, and since that time he has won year after year at all our largest and most important shows, and can claim to be one of the most successful sires at stud, having a great many winners to his credit at the show in question. His son Donington won two firsts and the champion prize for the best sporting terrier of any breed in the whole show. His daughter Decree Nisi also won first in her class, and another daughter, Donna Fortuna, won first in puppies and ultimately took the cup for the best fox-terrier in the show, and was universally considered to be one of the best puppies that have been seen for years.

Champion Dame Fortune is the winner of the first prize in the Open Class for bitches at Cruft's. She is a kennel-companion of Champion Dominie, to whom she is related, being his first great-granddaughter. She was bred by Mr. Redmond, her present owner, for whom she has won every prize in the fox-terrier world, and is the present owner of the Fox-Terrier Club's fifty-guinea Challenge Cup. She is also the dam of the splendid puppy (Donna Fortuna) above referred to. We understand that five hundred guineas has been declined at various times for this brace of terriers. The illustrations give Champion Dominie and Dame Fortune at work, also the last-named alone.

By the way, I have just been reading with interest the *Dog Owner's Annual*, now in its eighth year. The dog, it seems, has got a grievance or two. At Cruft's colossal Dog Show at the Agricultural Hall, the other day, over fifteen hundred dogs of pure lineage had evidently a grievance against the judges, and were giving free tongue to their disappointment. The judges must be mightily thankful their canine friends have not yet learned the little art of letter-writing, otherwise they would find very choice descriptions of themselves in the morning and sporting papers. One finds a decided echo of this grievance in the *Dog Owner's Annual*. The dogs had evidently quite forgotten the muzzle grievance at Cruft's Show, but Dr. Gordon Stables speaks out for them in this publication. The good Doctor flings the word "dog-muzzler" about him in a most objurgatory fashion, and

denies in emphatic terms the possibility of a compulsory muzzling order keeping hydrophobia down. The manner in which Dr. Stables deals with the question forcibly reminds one that he passed through his medical education when very little was known concerning the virus of hydrophobia. The muzzling order, we learn from the *Dog Owner's Annual*, threw a heavy strain upon that excellent institution the Battersea Home for Dogs, where, during last year, over forty thousand lost and starving dogs were received. Sir Everett Millais contributes an exceedingly instructive article on his attempts to infuse fresher blood into the Bassett bloodhounds, and other writers sum up the progress made in the several departments of the dog-world during last year.

A singular case of most abnormally posthumous interment took place recently at Revel, a Russian town near the Gulf of Finland. The body, or rather, mummy, thus tardily buried was that of the Belgian soldier of fortune, the Duc Charles de Croy, who had been Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Army at the historic battle of Narva in 1700. Made prisoner by the Swedes during the fight, De Croy took up his residence at Revel, where he died in the course of nature, his creditors, however, demurring to his burial until his debts had been paid in full. So the soldier was mummified, and his remains have stayed ever since then in a Lutheran church, where they have been exhibited to sightseers as a curiosity. Now, at last, amid such pomp as that afforded by the presence of the local authorities, the Duc Charles de Croy has been placed in a new coffin and properly interred in the vaults of this church, and thus ends as strange a chapter as the records of sepulture have ever contained.

When a man is out upon what may be called a grammar-hunt, he should be particularly careful about his own moods, tenses, singulars and plurals. The other day the *Daily Chronicle's* "H. W. M.," in a very superior and quasi-historical account of the South African Inquiry, and under the very superior heading "Mr. Rhodes as Sieyès—with a twist," let himself loose in the following very superior observation: "It was impossible to resist a smile as the witness broke into one of his abrupt, formless, grammarless orations." You read on and on until you hear from the same authority that "more damaging was Sir William's questions as to the pre-knowledge of the raid by parties in England." Now was they? It is "impossible to resist a smile."



CHAMPION DOMINIE AND
DAME FORTUNE.



DAME FORTUNE.

FROM THE PICTURE BY ARTHUR WARDLE.

WILL COMIC OPERA BE REVIVED?

Are we really to have a revival of comic opera? The success of "The Geisha" and of "La Poupée" indicates that musical comedy has had its turn. Save in the hands of what cant calls "clever people," musical comedy is far too amorphous to hold its own for any length of time. On the other hand, Gilbertian opera is too mechanical and inhuman. That, I take it, is the cause of the dispiriting reception meted out to "His Majesty." What we want, I think, is an opera that will take a humorous view of life, like Mozart's work. That need not be of French

shown that he can fish on both sides of the stream, is to be the principal, and the honorary vice-presidents are Mr. D'Oyly Carte, Mr. William Greet, Mr. George Edwardes, and Mr. Adrian Ross, whom you know as "Marmiton." Courses of singing, stage-deportment (taught by Madame Cavallazzi, of the Empire), stage-dancing (by Mr. Willie Ward), *ensemble*-and sight-singing, elocution, foreign languages, fencing, and physical culture, will be given. Mr. Adrian Ross ought to lecture on the literature of libretto. According to the prospectus—

It is estimated that there are now in London and in the provinces over one thousand ladies and gentlemen engaged in the daily performance of opera or



MISS ANNIE HALFORD AS SERPOLETTE IN "LES CLOCHES DE CORNEVILLE."

"Now look at that and look at this; don't you think they're not amiss?"

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY ALFRED ELLIS, UPPER BAKER STREET, N.W.

manufacture, although "La Poupée" came across the Channel. French comic opera suffered from painfully limping librettos, and yet "Les Cloches de Corneville" is still being toured by Mr. William Hogarth, Miss Annie Halford figuring as the saucy Serpolette. And this demand of the playgoer for comic opera is going to be met by the players themselves, for the "Lyric Stage Academy, Limited," has just been founded in Chandos Street for the purpose of giving a complete education for the lyric stage. Dr. Osmond Carr, whose scores for "Morocco Bound" on the one side, and for "His Excellency" on the other, have

musical comedy, the majority of whom have attained such knowledge as they have of the practical work and details of the stage by actual experience, and not by any previous technical education. It is proposed that the students should periodically perform some light opera recently produced in London, and the loan of costumes and a theatre has been promised for such performances. London and provincial managers will be specially invited to witness these performances, with a view to selecting members for their companies. Students who wish to compete for the full certificate of proficiency, an examination for which will be held at the end of each Academic year, must offer themselves as candidates in each subject in the curriculum. The fee for each separate subject is £3 3s., but the whole curriculum may be taken by an inclusive fee of £8 8s.



THE HUMOURS OF EDITORSHIP.

At a time when no office in life is sacred, the gentle art of newspaper editing has been written round again and again. It is, however, the manufacture of the daily paper that has engaged the attention of the best attempts to describe the 'editorial "sanctum"'—the very word purports mystery, wherefore I know not. Two novels,

both written by Scotsmen, stand out in my recollection to-day solely on account of such descriptions, namely, "My Ducats and my Daughter," which contains the best description of a political "heckling" ever written; and "When a Man's Single." Magazines have also been touched upon on many an occasion—strange, impossible magazines mostly, unreal, but not the less humorous. But the illustrated weekly newspaper has escaped the attention of romancers, ever on the outlook for new avenues in which to lead the curious.

Not that the curious need the stimulus of fiction to lead their footsteps into the kingdom of Fleet Street. They come of their own accord on all sorts of missions, for, what the tented circus is to boyhood, and the stage-door to the footlight frivoller, the said editorial sanctum is to an older generation. I know that little army of stragglers by heart—the strange camp-followers of what we call journalism; the artist with the portfolio of impossible pictures, chosen with entire forgetfulness of the objects of *The Sketch*; the pretty and sometimes powdered player, who wants her "portrait in"; the young lady who has written a story of moderate length, and who has been referred to by the local paper as the "gifted authoress"; and last of all—for I can take only types—the balladmonger of both sexes. The last have, of late, been particularly solicitous to interview me. Their hearts have been stirred by what one of them recently described to me, as he fumbled an enormous packet, was the "great and glorious event in our history, the celebration of her Gracious Majesty the Queen's sixtieth anniversary on the throne." Within the last week I have had offers of six epics on this event—epics too precious to be consigned to her Majesty's mail-carriers, but brought to me personally as if they were the most precious palimpsests that the world possesses. Day after day these camp-followers appear, until the lead on the stairs has to be replaced at intervals, and until I am able to remember, not individuals, but the great types which they represent.

It is otherwise, however, with the letters which represent those followers who either live at too great a distance to bombard Milford Lane, or who hold it in too great reverence to enter its steep descent. Some of these, however, I have kept by me, just to show you that it is not mere fancy that makes me insist on the humours and, let me add, the pathos of my calling. One of the saddest of them—and yet, withal, so grotesquely humorous that its genuineness might be doubted—came from a vicarage in the Midlands last autumn. For me, the vicarage dispelled any doubts as to the good faith of it all. The writer, a lady, sent me a budget of poems and a letter of six pages—

I write (she confided) as poets feel—all sorts, comic and grave—so you can't judge by one poem. I may be weak in those sent. I have two hundred in print, ready for the book, if I can bring it out. I want to find a kindred mind. Mr. —, the Marquis of —, Lord —, and Longfellow have written "they like my verse," but I have no money, and, being only a woman and unable to go to London Clubs, I can't get on as men do. I enclose stamps, as you are sure (nearly so) to send all back. I can't think why some are helped forward and others kept back, or why William Watson was not put before the Laureate, or why people give a shilling to Dr. Grace for cricket and not a poet for poems. It isn't fair! Please excuse this paper; I have no more. It is all used up for poems. MSS paper is a consideration. I think of little less now than the cruelty to poets—and the Armenians. Please excuse prose—I can't write it well. A new charity. Sums of money to be left to enable new poets to publish their works.

I was very sorry for the lady—much more, I am afraid, than for the Armenians—sorry because she was unable to see that her verses were quite hopeless for this journal, and sorry because I had to send them all back, just as she fully expected. Her expectation was a redeeming feature in the case, for some poets wax exceeding wroth even if a mistake is made in the postage of a letter for which they send no stamps. Within a few days of the receipt of this lady's letter I got this one from Berlin—

SIR,—I thank you for the return of my sonnet. Enclosed I beg to hand you the cover containing the same, from which you will observe that I had to pay twenty-five pence for insufficient postage. This amount, as well as the cost of this letter, I shall be glad if you will refund to me in German stamps at your early convenience.

And then there is the angry author who resents criticism. Of a certain novel one of my contributors—an Irishman, as it happens—remarked, "Interesting no one could find it." The novelist wrote at once, to the effect that "many reviews have found it interesting," and then he wound up—

I, an Irishman, could not have expected from the pen of an English gentleman such a review as that which appears in your issue; but it will be a help to sell and circulate the work, as I shall publish it side by side with the reviews of as capable and more fair-minded men.

Sometimes the path I must follow is broadly hinted at, as, for example, by the gentleman who wrote—

Will you be good enough to inform me approximately when the biography, &c., of Miss Marie Corelli may be expected to appear in the Literary Page? A reply at your early convenience will oblige.

To the same school belongs the gentleman of St. Stephen's Club who sent me the card I have reproduced here. I did not reply to him at the time, but, in case this column may catch his eye as he scans a borrowed copy of *The Sketch*, let me say to him that I do not know Miss Letty Lind personally; that she has never paid a farthing to have her portrait produced in these pages; that, on the contrary, I have paid several guineas, by way of photographic fees, for doing so; and, finally, that I hope to do so yet again from time to time while that gifted young lady maintains her present well-deserved popularity.

Then there are the humorists—the contributors who meet me with a quaint turn of phrase or request that is altogether engaging. A clever young journalist sent me some notes which he hoped were worthy of insertion—which they were.

If I am wrong [he continued], please do not trouble to return them. My excuse is that I am one of the unfortunate souls who went down with the —; and I am endeavouring to keep afloat by lightening myself of manuscript.

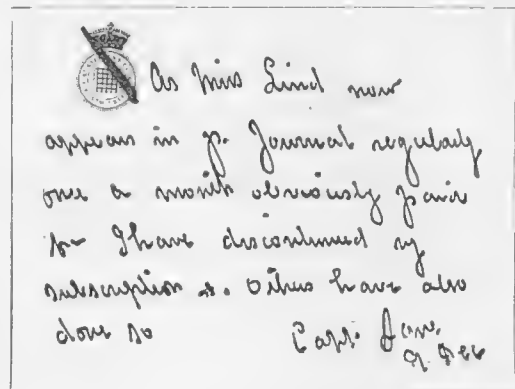
Another morning I received the following—

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—Please, what has become of "Phil May"? We are a busy lot all the week, but Sundays we look at the master's *Sketch*, and always look for the "Light Side of Nature," but lately we have missed "P. M." sadly. I wonder if he is dead or gone away. If the latter, I hope it will do him good, and that he will soon come back. Hoping you will get this, . . .

But the most extraordinary letter I ever received came from Aberdeenshire, of all places. It consisted of twenty-one pages (partly in French), written in red ink, and began, "I am Your Most Gracious Royal Majesty Your High Omnipotent Almighty Creator, Your Almighty Imperial Highness of Creation." It is not often that I get such a letter as this. Once is enough in a lifetime.

THE NEW ART.

Said a Beardsley boy to a Bradley girl
Whom he met on a poster blue,
"I haven't an idea who I am,
And who the deuce are you?"
Said the Bradley girl to the Beardsley boy,
"I'll tell you what I think:
I came into being one night last week
When a cat tipped over the ink."—*The Clack Book*.



"ONE WHO KNOWS."

A NOVEL IN A NUTSHELL.

INSIDE THE CITY.

BY ALFRED HURRY.

Herbert Skinner, company-promoter, sat in his Cannon Street office, arrayed in broadcloth and fine linen. His frock-coat was in the latest fashion, and his trousers were of a new and original cut; his boots were resplendent patent-leathers; he had a beautiful tawny moustache, and his hair was remarkably well groomed. The diamond that lit up his snowy tie had cost the British public fifty thousand sterling. It was the first and last stone found in the mine which Skinner sold to a company for that sum. But nature tempered the wind to the shorn lamb, and gave the shareholders this one stone ready polished.

The promoter was in excellent spirits. Applications for shares in the Cien Burros (Mexico) Mining Company, Limited, were coming in wholesale by every post; the prospectuses were selling at sixpence apiece. The thought of this success gave a peculiarly delicate aroma to his half-crown Havana.

Enter an office-boy.

"Miss Wilmot, sir."

"Who the devil's Miss Wilmot? Oh, I know—after the typewriter job. Show her in."

Miss Wilmot was shown in. She was a very young girl, evidently new to the dignity of long dresses and turned-up hair. She was nervous, and trembled visibly as the gorgeous vision in the arm-chair put her through her paces.

"H'm! I see you ask ten shillings a-week. How much did they give you at your last place?"

"Twenty pounds a-year."

"Let me see—that's seven-and-sixpence a-week. Why do you want ten shillings now?"

"Because I—I thought that seven-and-sixpence was such a little."

"H'm! How long were you at your other place—where was it? Oh, Phyrnix and Son, East India Avenue. You don't say in your letter."

"Six weeks."

"That's a very short time. Why did you leave?"

Miss Wilmot turned red.

"I'd rather not say," she answered.

"Why not? Did they work you too hard, or did they smoke too much? Come, you must tell me, please."

"I boxed one of their ears."

"Which one's ears? Phyrnix's or the son's?"

"Mr. Edward Phyrnix's—the son's."

"Why did you box Mr. Edward Phyrnix's ears?"

"He—he tried to kiss me—and he was not at all nice-looking."

"Good. Well, Miss Wilmot, just show me how you can write these letters. Got a note-book? No? Then you ought to have. Here, take this scribbling-paper. Here's a pen. Now: 'To Messrs. Heneage and Innes, Angel Court. Dear Sirs,—'"

Miss Wilmot dotted the letters down. When Skinner had finished dictating he introduced her to a typewriter that stood on a table in a little room adjoining.

"I'm going out to lunch now. I shall be back in three-quarters of an hour. You ought to have them finished by then."

He put on a glorious silk hat and went out.

Miss Wilmot clacked away at the letters vigorously. Sharp to time the promoter returned. She had finished all but the last.

"What, not finished yet? Well, let me see what you have done."

The letters were fairly accurate. Miss Wilmot's spelling was above the feminine average, but not much. She spelt "perceive" correctly, but gave "benefited" an extra *t*. For the technical words she had wisely left blanks, instead of perpetrating orthographical monstrosities.

"Hem, hem! You've made one or two mistakes, I see. You must always put 'Messrs.' I know a man who lost a most valuable liqui—contract through not putting 'Messrs.' Now, I can't have mistakes in my letters. However, I'll give you a trial. With regard to your salary. Well, I won't give you ten shillings a-week—the candidate uttered a sigh of resignation—"but, as I shall want you to work hard and well—very well, mind!—I'll give you twelve. That's what I used to give Miss Lucas."

"Oh, thank you very much!"

Miss Wilmot's face lit up like magic.

"When can you start?"

"Whenever you like," responded the girl eagerly.

"Start now, then."

The new typewriter suited. She was quick and intelligent, and picked up the slang of the Stock Exchange with much ease. She fathomed the difference between a "bull" and a "bear" immediately when Skinner explained it to her; and she even acquired a hazy idea of the nature of an "option." The mysterious term "rig" puzzled her, but Skinner seldom used it. She was also somewhat surprised when her employer wrote to an intimate friend, saying, "I don't know what you mean by wrecking." She looked up. "I don't mean your kind of wrecking, Miss," he remarked drily. "You take down the letter." Despite these stumbling-blocks, however, Miss Wilmot probably learnt more of company-promoting from the inside than has any other

school-girl before or since, and when she could not decipher a word in her notes would substitute another just as good.

Skinner became quite proud of her, and used to relate her feats of intelligent letter-writing to his cronies at lunch, who listened enviously, because most of them were turning grey through correcting errors in their correspondence.

One day Miss Wilmot wrote seven letters without making a single mistake, thus establishing a record which even the maker has not broken. Skinner was so pleased that he rummaged out some French confectionery in an ornamental box (which an insolvent sweetstuff firm who wanted to sell their liabilities to the public had sent him), and threw it over to her.

"And you can eat it now. Only, don't make your letters sticky," he said.

For the next two hours the clacking of the Remington was accompanied by a subdued but ecstatic sucking.

The following morning something exciting occurred. Skinner was reading the letters, and Miss Wilmot was waiting, pencil in hand, for the replies. He read one letter very attentively, swore a terrible oath through his teeth, put the letter aside, and went on with the rest. Miss Wilmot's eyes opened very wide and round. She had never heard a full-flavoured company-promoting imprecation before.

Having read the other letters and dictated the answers, Skinner took up the one upon which he had commented. There seemed nothing especially discomposing in this communication. It was dated from Attenbury Buildings, Holborn, and smelt faintly of whisky and stale tobacco.

DEAR MR. SKINNER,—Since I left you I have been doing very little and am rather hard up now. I am thinking of doing a little literary work, as I cannot get anything else. Would you like me to publish a short biography of yourself, giving an account of how you have attained your present position in the City? A brief sketch of a well-known man like you would sell well. Give me an appointment, and I will call and discuss the matter.—I remain your obedient servant,
JACOB GRICE.

As a rule, when a man sees a chance of attaining a little publicity he does not swear. On the contrary, he generally requests his would-be biographer to call on an early date, and gives him all the facts possible and a good cigar. But this case was not an ordinary one. Grice did not want to be paid for publishing that pamphlet, but for suppressing it. It would be worth Skinner's while to have it suppressed. It would contain details of all the bogus companies he had floated, together with a history of the Cien Burros property, and would show how Skinner, having purchased the said property from a half-starved American, for fifty pounds, a dinner at the Café Royal, and a cab fare, had sold it to the British public some seven or eight times under different names. Skinner had done very well over the Cien Burros deals, and had purchased a steam-yacht on the profits.

All these things and many more would Mr. Grice relate in his pamphlet—the steam-yacht would probably have a chapter to itself—if his late employer did not pay him something substantial to stifle his literary yearnings. He would send that pamphlet round to all Skinner's relations and friends. He might even hire a man to sell the work at the door of the church where Skinner was churchwarden, with a placard proclaiming the interesting nature of its contents.

Skinner reflected thus while Miss Wilmot rattled away at her letters. She made several mistakes, because she was thinking of the strange oath which her employer had sworn.

"Take this letter," he called presently. She opened the door. "To Mr. Jacob Grice, Attenbury Buildings, Holborn. Dear Mr. Grice,—Please call to-morrow at twelve. Yours faithfully, etcetera.' And this one—'Sergeant O'Maholan, Old Jewry. Dear Sir,—I should be obliged if you would step in here for a few minutes any time this afternoon.'"

The notes were written and despatched, the first by post, and the second by the office-boy.

O'Maholan came about two. He was not detained long.

"How are you, Sergeant?" said Skinner affably. "I want you to get me a smart burglar with his tools this evening. I want him to drill a hole in this safe."

He indicated a mighty iron safe at his elbow. The door was open, and the sergeant stepped inside and rapped the sides.

"Where do you want the holes, sir—through the door or through the sides?"

"Through the door."

"All right. I'll send you Billy Umber. He's very clever; he did that job at the Bucklersbury Bank in '84, you know. He's only just out, but he's sure to have some tools, or, if not, he can easily borrow some. But wouldn't the safe people do it for you?"

"I don't want to get them. They'd be wondering what it was for, and get talking. A man who used to be with me is trying a little blackmail on me, and I'm going to put my witness in that safe. He knows the office—Grice is the man; you've seen him often—and the safe's about the only place in which he won't look."

"That's a very good idea, sir," said O'Maholan. "I never heard of a safe being used before."

"Can your man come to-night?" said Skinner. "I must have it done to-night."

"I expect so. I'll send down to Mile End at once, and let you

know. If he can't come, I can easily get someone else as good. Shall I send him round, whoever it is, sir?"

"Yes, six o'clock sharp. Thanks, Sergeant."

The burly, good-tempered plain-clothes officer withdrew, richer by a sovereign, and puffing one of the Havanas which Skinner kept in the left-hand drawer of his desk.

At four o'clock he sent round to say that Mr. Umber was in the bar of the Brazen Fleece, and would come on to Cannon Street at six.

When Miss Wilmot arrived next morning she wondered what had been burning. Skinner came at eleven and read the letters, looking very black. He dictated the replies, chewing his moustache the while. Marshall, his head clerk, had wired saying he had the influenza and could not come to the office. Skinner wanted Marshall to help him checkmate Grice, to do which it was necessary that the clerk should be an unseen witness to the interview. One of the other clerks would make as good a witness; but the promoter could trust Marshall, whereas he could not trust the others. Any of them might at some future time develop *cacoëthes scribendi* after the manner of Grice.

Skinner commenced to scrutinise Miss Wilmot's face attentively, without interrupting his dictation. She was a pretty girl, and worth looking at; but the promoter was blind to prettiness in office hours. Miss Wilmot's dark eyes and the soft curls on her forehead were her best points—they sometimes reminded Skinner of his daughter who had died—but Skinner only scrutinised her mouth. Typewriter girls are not alive to the remunerativeness of writing pamphlets for suppression, but, on the other hand, they are liable to become hysterical at critical moments.

The result of his inspection was satisfactory. Besides, he recollected that she had boxed the ears of Phyrnix junior.

"She'll do," he said to himself. "She's timid, but she's game."

"Do you remember writing a letter to a man named Grice," he said, "asking him to call at twelve?"

"I think so—oh yes, I remember."

"Well, when he comes I want you to sit in this safe and listen to e-ve-ry word he says through this hole. See here."

The promoter wheeled round to the safe and indicated a small, round hole neatly drilled through the door. Miss Wilmot's eyes opened very wide.

"You'll just be able to hear nicely," explained Skinner lucidly. "It'll be on a level with his head when he sits down, and I'll manage so that he gets close up."

"But I don't like—"

"Oh, you'll be all right," said Skinner decidedly. "It won't take five minutes. I'll leave the door open until he comes. Be quick; he may be here any minute."

He unlocked the door, and put a small stool inside. Miss Wilmot watched these preparations with some alarm. A vague idea floated through her mind that eavesdropping in a patent safe was scarcely one of the functions of a shorthand and typewriting clerk. However, her employer seemed to think it was.

She got up and approached dubiously.

"Be quick, Miss," said Skinner.

She entered and sat down.

"That's the style. Now, I'm just going to shut the door for five seconds, to see if you can hear all right. Do you mind?"

"No," said Miss Wilmot faintly.

Click went the door.

"Can you hear me?" said the promoter in a loud whisper.

"Yes."

Skinner swung the door open again, disclosing the girl sitting there, pale but upright. He eyed her for a moment, then pulled his moustache.

"Look here, Miss Wilmot, if you'd rather not do it, say so. You've only got to say the word. I shan't be angry."

"Yes, I'll do it," said the girl, clenching her fists.

"You're quite sure you're not frightened?"

"Yes."

"Good. Now, I'll leave the door open until the very last moment. And if you want to come out—even while Grice is here—all you've got to do is to tap, and I'll open the door instantly."

He handed her a ruler.

"If she uses it, it'll mean a thousand quid to me," said Skinner to himself. "Grice won't walk into a trap a second time, and he'll stick the price on. He's got absolutely no conscience, that man."

Gillespie, the second clerk, tapped at the door.

"Mr. Grice, sir."

"Show him in."

Skinner swung the door of the safe to without a sound. Grice entered. He was very seedy, and the dinginess of his linen was relieved by beer-stains.

"Well, you d—— blackmailer," said Skinner, "sit down. And take that infernal cringing smile off your face."

Mr. Grice did not sit down. He looked all round the office, behind Skinner's desk, and opened the door of the typewriter's room. Then he sat down.

"How are you, sir? It's a long time since I saw you, ain't it? Going on all right, I hope?"

"Blast your hopes! How much do you want?"

"Well, it'll be worth fifty pounds, won't it, sir?"

"Yes, and I suppose you'll want another fifty when you've got rid of that fifty, or else give me away to the rest of the crowd?"

"I swear I won't do anything of the kind. I don't do business in that way," said Grice with an injured air.

"I'll give you thirty. Oh, keep your filthy breath out of my face!" Grice shoved his chair back and bumped against the safe. The worm was getting angry.

"Thirty won't do; I must have fifty."

"You must have fifty? Must you, eh? Why, you haven't got the money to pay the printer, and I'm d—— sure no one would do it on tick for you."

"Oh, indeed? If I don't have that fifty I'll get it printed and out in a fortnight—by God, I will!"

"In a fortnight? I say, Grice," said Skinner, changing his tone; "don't you think this is infernally ungrateful of you to come and round on me after all I've done for you? Besides, as you know yourself, the game isn't what it used to be. That infernal Winding-up Act has spoilt it."

"I know all about that," said Grice doggedly. "But, if you can afford to come to the City in a pair-horse brougham, you can afford to give me fifty quid. Come, give me fifty, and I won't publish it."

"You won't publish the pamphlet if I give you fifty pounds? Word of honour, Grice! No? Good! That's all I wanted to know. Could you hear all right, miss?"

"Yes," faltered Miss Wilmot, as Skinner opened the door, revealing her seated on a stool.

"Good God! In the safe!" shrieked Grice. "I shall get seven years for this!"

"Yes, you will, you snake, if you ever try to bleed me again. I've a d—— good mind to step round to the Mansion House and ask for a warrant, as it is. And I will, too, if I have any more of your nonsense. I'd risk going into the box to get you put away, you blackmailing thief!"

"Well, I'm licked—in the safe!" repeated Grice, staring at the third party. "Here, I say, this is kid. She couldn't hear through six inches of iron."

"Not unless there was a hole in it," said Skinner, putting aside the insurance almanack with which he had masked his battery. Grice collapsed.

"Sit down on the sofa, Miss Wilmot. You're not frightened, are you?"

The typewriter uttered a feeble negative and tottered to the sofa.

"Would you like some brandy?" asked Skinner. "You'd better."

He sent out for some. Miss Wilmot drank a little and coughed.

"That's enough," said the promoter. "You'd better eat some of those sweets I gave you the other day to take the taste out of your mouth."

Miss Wilmot sucked a sweet and recovered visibly.

"What the deuce are you waiting for?" said Skinner fiercely to Grice. "If you don't clear out, I'll kick you out."

Grice departed abjectly; but he cast a sinister look at the girl as he left the room.

"Miss Wilmot," said the promoter, "I'm going to raise your salary to fifteen shillings a-week, starting with this week. You've done me a great service. Shake hands."

Miss Wilmot shook hands, and thanked him with her mouth full. She had forgotten all about the safe episode.

"I'll have a new hat for next Sunday, and I'll take Ma to a matinée," she said within herself. She attacked her letters with energy to make up for lost time, and Skinner went out chuckling and puffing a mighty cigar. Like most clever financiers, he drank very little, or else he might have celebrated the occasion with champagne.

Grice went back to Attenbury Buildings a sadder and a poorer man than he had expected to return. He sat on his bed and drank whisky and cursed Skinner. But more especially did he curse the typewriter girl.

"I'd like to give the little—— some rats' poison instead of sweets," he said to himself.

By-and-by he got drunk. His ideas became brilliant, but he lost his common sense. He bethought him of a certain packet in his trunk, but he forgot that when a man commits a clumsy murder he is hanged by the neck until he is dead, which renders it difficult for him to levy blackmail.

"I'll get his bally witness out of the way," hiccupped Grice, "and then I'll bleed him—hic!—like the devil."

He got out the packet, which he had bought after seeing a friend, convicted to penal servitude at the Old Bailey, run round the dock like a rat in a corner, looking up the sides and squealing. He then sat considering. At length the right idea came floating along, and Grice, after a little struggle, managed to hold it tight. He acted on it, and in half an hour was in bed with his boots on, sleeping soundly.

The following morning Miss Wilmot found a neat packet, which had come by post, lying on her table. She opened it with anxious speculation. It was a box of Turkish Delight; her mouth watered at the sight, and her eyes sparkled with triumph.

"He must have sent it," said she, and laughed wickedly.

He was not Grice, of course, but a youthful clerk whose acquaintance she had made during a recent dinner-hour.

She cut off a large, square lump, taking care not to spill the sugar. As she put it in her mouth Skinner entered.

"Good morning, Miss Wilmot," said the promoter genially, opening the door and glancing in.

Instead of replying, the girl gave a half-choked cry, and fell on the floor.

"Good God! what's the matter?" said Skinner. He ran to her and picked her up, but she slipped down again, struggling convulsively.

Skinner's first thought was that she was hysterical, and he

THE BOOK OF RUTH

Illustrated by Gilbert James.



1896

RUTH THE MOABITRESS

... to Gomer took Ruth
and she became his
wife.

commenced to slap her hands, and, calling in the office-boy, told him to fetch the housekeeper. But it was impossible for anyone, however ignorant of feminine ailments, long to mistake the symptoms that Miss Wilmot displayed for hysterics. Besides, Skinner's eye had struck the sweetstuff, and the address on the wrapper.

"Poisoned, by the living God!" he exclaimed. "It's Grice!"

He rushed out of the office and across Cannon Street to Badcock's, the chemist. Old Badcock came at once. Miss Wilmot was lying on her side against the sofa, quite still. The white-haired chemist knelt down beside her and shuddered.

"Quite dead," he said. "It's poison of some sort. What—where—?"

"Gillespie!" roared Skinner; "take a cab and go to the Mansion House, and say you want a couple of constables to arrest a man for murder—Grice is the man. He may be at Attenbury Buildings. If he's gone, give 'em his description—short, red hair, and game eye."

"I must go back," said the chemist; "I can't do any good." He went back to his shop, wiping his forehead.

Two big City policemen came filing in; but Skinner took no notice of them. He stood in the middle of the room staring at what lay on the floor. One of the officers looked round and, seeing a couple of towels hanging at the far end of the room, took them down and arranged them over it. There came the sound of a scuffle in the outer office.

transpired that, about five minutes after the hour, he was knocked down by a cab while crossing from Newgate Street to the top of Cheapside. His forehead was cut, but he was only stunned, so they took him into a chemist's shop and tied a handkerchief round his head. When he came to, he insisted upon going, and rushed, staggering, up Cheapside. But he arrived at Cannon Street ten minutes too late.

Skinner, after giving his evidence, returned to the office with his hat brushed the wrong way and his tie outside his waistcoat. In the course of the afternoon he received a call from Miss Wilmot's widowed mother. The interview was a painful one. Mrs. Wilmot shed tears and wrung her hands, and declared that she could not believe her Nellie was really dead. She varied this by calling Skinner "Wretch" and "Murderer" and "Fiend in human shape."

The promoter said afterwards—and possibly with truth—that, rather than have faced this interview, he would have rendered himself personally liable for the losses on his next company.

FLOWER-FIELDS IN SCILLY.

The flower-fields in the Scilly Isles are just now a wonderful sight. There has been a strange week of sea-fog, and the air has been warm and humid. Visitors say it is like living in a green-house. This humid



THE ONLY FIELDS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM WITH A HEDGE OF PALM-TREES AND BAMBOOS.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY MR. KING.

The door opened, and Grice burst in. He was a hideous spectacle. Round his head was a bandage streaked with blood; his eyes were bloodshot; his face was livid and dripping with sweat. He halted for a moment, glaring at the white heap on the floor, and then darted forward and lifted one of the towels. He threw up his hands and screamed. A look passed between the officers, and one of them sidled up to the door, pushing the awestruck clerks outside.

Skinner removed his glare from the towels and fixed it on Grice.

"You monster! You—you devil!"

He advanced slowly towards the blackmailer, who backed round the room. Skinner made a dart, but the policemen threw themselves on him. He dragged them across the office, screaming imprecations against Grice.

"Let me get at you! Come here, you Grice, and let me wring your blasted neck!"

Grice did not respond to this invitation. He retreated behind the desk. He put his foot into the waste-paper basket and fell backwards with his neck on the sill of the safe. Skinner dragged the policemen crash against the desk. It upset, and the struggling mob shot sprawling over the desk against the safe-door, which went to like a flash. It spread Grice's neck right across the sill, and his lower jaw became a thing of the past.

A double inquest was held the next day.

A housekeeper from Attenbury Buildings stated that about ten o'clock on the morning of the tragedy she was nearly overturned by Grice as he rushed downstairs and out of the building without a hat. It

warmth has brought the flowers on marvellously, even too fast for the hard-working flower-growers. A few days ago one of the larger growers sent away by one steamer boxes of flowers weighing one ton sixteen hundredweight, or, say, twenty thousand dozen bunches, and this was perhaps the largest consignment ever sent by one person at a time. The packing-rooms are crammed with flowers, and men and women busy tying them up into bunches and putting them into the boxes. No one can understand until he has visited a packing-room at this season what a wonderful sight it is. The great masses of yellow and white flowers, the dusky green of the stems and leaves, the glorious deep-red of the *Fulgens* anemones, and the browns and pale-yellows of the wallflowers, united, form a glowing mass of colour of wondrous beauty. The sweet, penetrating odour is almost overpowering, and seems to fill the air and render it heavy to breathe. As the visitor walks around the fields he is struck by certain notable features. The dracæna, or cabbage-palm, and the bamboo grow in these islands, and nowhere else in the kingdom can be seen such a sight as in our illustration. It represents a field of the polyanthus Grand Monarque, containing perhaps sixty thousand blooms, and worth, let us say, fifty pounds, and the field, which belongs to Mr. Trevellick, of Rocky Hill, is bordered by palms and bamboos, and looks curiously Oriental in appearance. Fine high hedges of euonymus, myrtle, or veronica, with its deep-purple blooms, divide up the fields into plots and shelter the flowers from the wind, and around the field you find the escallonia in full flower, and the hedge covered with the tender pink bloom.

"PALLADIA." *

Mrs. Fraser's story is a fine example of the romantic novel of modern life of which "The Prisoner of Zenda" was the worthy forerunner. Ouida has always been an exponent and mistress of this style, but Ouida, even Ouida, is becoming a little old-fashioned, and we begin to miss in her books the realistic note which gives force to more recent exponents of her style. But the picturesqueness of the intrigue and diplomacy of Continental and even Asiatic Courts, combined with the mild *tracasseries* of an English village, has been used by Mrs. Fraser to great advantage, and, though



MRS. HUGH FRASER.

Photo by Russell, Baker Street, W.

her plot is not so magnificently dramatic as some of Ouida's, it has gained in reality and convincingness. Her stage is crowded with a host of miscellaneous cosmopolitan characters, who play their parts in this tale of love and intrigue with vigour and conviction. We have a Grand Duchess of Carinthia, an Asiatic Prince, a High Church Curate, a fatal military personage, Colonel Denzil, familiarly known as "Frontier Johnny," Anarchists, Gipsies, and romantic supers of all kinds. There are continual "alarums and excursions," as Shakspeare puts it, two dynamite explosions, and an adumbration of a third; a murder, and a trial for life. It is a stroke of audacity to make the villain of the novel out of a real live Shahzada, in whom we trace an accurate portrait of our august visitor of a season or two ago, and his little goings on in one of the stately homes of England, "situated in Park Lane." This gentleman falls in love with the Grand Duchess of Carinthia, and so does Lactantius Oriel, the curate, and Colonel Denzil, who is the attendant of the Shahzada. There is a wicked Princess Demetria, and her lover, Rouman, the heir-apparent. The adventures, amatory and otherwise, of these distinguished persons make a very stirring novel, full of colour, life, and movement, of the kind which has lately grown so fashionable in literature. Mrs. Fraser seems almost to have lived through some of the scenes she describes. In the early pages of "Palladia" we have the privilege of assisting at some very good presentations of the dynamite horror, which may be said to hang over all crowned heads abroad. One explosion occurs at Palladia's wedding to Grand Duke Carolus. In the banqueting-hall the "scions of effete monarchies" stand erect, "surprised and pale indeed, but scorning the panic terrors of the crowd," but in the ball-room all is confusion—

The explosion spared the two ends of the great hall, and when poor Countess Dirckheim struggled to her knees from where she had fallen in the doorway, she gasped and held out her arms across a black abyss to the Princess Saya, lying white and golden and very still amid the torn, huddled draperies of her sister's throne. . . . Between them yawned a depth of blackness many feet wide, where the dynamite had torn its scorching way from wall to wall. An iron girder, bent like wire by the blast, still spanned the gulf, and below was darkness, from whence issued a little smoke. Some charred beam sent it up sixty feet from where it lay in the bared vaults of the foundations. The walls were still rocking. . . . Then a tongue of fire crept through the steps and began to lick its silent way up towards the white dress. . . .

* "Palladia." By Mrs. Hugh Fraser. London: Macmillan.

Like the Shahzada of—Bhélat, as she calls him, like Duke Carolus, like Prince Mouravief, like Lactantius Oriel, like "Frontier Johnny," the *preux chevalier* who rides about English lanes with her and calls her "Ma'am," Mrs. Fraser is deeply in love with her own heroine. Palladia is very womanly, very witty, very gentle, very beautiful—a sort of paragon even among heroines. She is complicated, capricious, and charming, and when I have said that, and hinted at the varied and remarkable scenes through which this young lady passes, and passes unscathed—a Una with no lion at all to lead her in the cosmopolitan wilderness through which Mrs. Fraser's exuberant fancy guides her, I have said enough to impel everyone to read this clever and spirited book.

"THE JUGGLER AND THE SOUL." *

Mrs. Shelley's "Frankenstein" must, we fear, be reckoned among those classics which Voltaire said owed their immortality to their never being read. In every newspaper and in most books Frankenstein stands for the monster created, whereas that creature is appropriately a nameless horror, and Frankenstein is the name of its creator. Even Miss Helen Mathers, while she pays Mrs. Shelley the compliment in her striking story, "The Juggler and the Soul," of making a like horror the mainspring of its interest, gives the original monster the name of its creator. In "The Juggler and the Soul," life is simply made to change houses, to be transferred by transfusion of blood from the body of a murderer to that of his victim, with the result of a transfer to the reanimated victim of the Iago-like character of the murderer. Hence the singular and crushing ill-fortune of the charming heroine, who, loving one man, liking another, and loathing a third, marries the man she merely likes, only to find that, through this transfusion of blood, he is essentially the man she loathed. This Iago-soul is at length exorcised through the burial of the body it was drained out of, but the exorcism cost the body it was drained into its life, and the heroine is thus set free to marry the man she loved. We feel towards Miss Mathers the gratitude of the young lady in *Punch*, who cries, "Oh, thank you so much!" to the gentleman who relieves his own soul and hers through his cataract of curses when the gate of the Underground is slapped-to in his face. Similarly, Miss Mathers applies to some of her sister novelists language we fain would use, but dare not. On the other hand, she pays a deserved compliment to Anthony Hope and Marion Crawford: "Alas! that it should be so, but the vilest portraits of woman are drawn by sordid-minded women; it is in the chivalrous hearts of an Anthony Hope or a Marion Crawford that we must look for the old romantic, worshipped ideal of what woman once was, and still may be." Miss Mathers' heroines are always charming, and not the least winsome of her "rose-bud garden of girls" is the heroine of "The Juggler and the Soul."

* "The Juggler and the Soul." By Helen Mathers. London: Skelington and Son.



MY LADY BETTY.

Photo by Simpson, Aberdeen.

MRS. HESLIP AND THE BRONTËS IN IRELAND.

BY DR. WILLIAM WRIGHT.

Whoever touches the story of the Brontës does so at his peril. The hostility that found expression on the appearance of Mrs. Gaskell's book, and led to the excision of obnoxious passages, is a matter of history. The bitterness of wounded feeling, borne in silence, is a matter of certain knowledge.

The appearance of Sir Wemyss Reid's book excited resentment among the Brontës in Ireland, only less fierce than that which was called forth by the *Quarterly Review*, and the reply of Mr. John Brontë, in the *New York Herald*, was published and circulated widely throughout the North of Ireland. The publications of Mr. Birrell and Miss Robinson acted on the Irish Brontës as additional irritants. I knew all this personally, and, therefore, I waited, accumulating facts till the third generation of the County Down Brontës had passed away, and I thought that an attempt to restore vividly the heroic Irish scenes that stand behind the romantic English, might be looked upon with sympathy by the Brontës of to-day, who are sufficiently removed in time and feeling from the heroic age of their ancestors to appreciate even an imperfect attempt to rescue from oblivion the forgotten traditions of their race. Circumstances had made me the depository of strange scraps of information regarding this gifted family. I had come to know a good many of them personally. I knew how unjustly the biographers had represented the English Brontës, with a mere background of "*potatoes and Pruntyism*," and I did not think that sensitiveness on the part of their descendants would stand in the way of their impressive personality being made known. Nor was I altogether disappointed.

Mr. John Brontë, who made the onslaught on Sir Wemyss Reid's book, is an educated and prosperous man, the most important representative of his gifted family. As a scholar and man of wide experience, he has great stores of Brontë lore, but, unfortunately, I was unable to consult him when writing my book. He, however, wrote me as follows from New Zealand—

I cannot refrain from congratulating you on the treatment of the history of my ancestors in your lately published book "*The Brontës in Ireland*." . . . Of one thing I am certain: you have given the world the last word on the history of the Brontës in the British Isles. . . . The only portion that I can honestly take exception to is the shebeen.

This testimony is the more valuable as it comes unsolicited from a man who knows more of the Brontës in Ireland than any man living except myself.

Before publishing my book, I visited personally nearly all the descendants of the Brontës of whose existence I was aware. Mrs. Heslip was ill, and I did not see her, but a friend did, and at page 50 I stated the deliberate conclusion that none of the descendants knew anything of the early history of the family. And in this matter they differ in no way from most of their neighbours. I find also, on undoubted authority, that there were some half-dozen *raconteurs* besides Hugh Brontë; but their names are almost forgotten, and their stories wholly gone. Hugh's stories would also have been lost but for the circumstances narrated in my book. With these facts in view, it is unnecessary to challenge Mrs. Heslip's honesty in her statements to the *Sketch* interviewer. On matters coming within her own knowledge she speaks honestly to the best of her recollection, though her memory is sometimes at fault. On matters of which she has had no personal knowledge her testimony is worthless.

Mrs. Heslip declared she never heard anything of the carrying away of the child to the banks of the Boyne. I have no doubt she spoke truly, for my friend found that she knew nothing whatever of her ancestors. But her aunts or uncles could have given her information on the point. Alice, the last of Patrick's sisters, told the Rev. J. B. Lusk the story in outline in her last interview with him, and he reported it to me in a letter written Feb. 3, 1891, as follows—

Her father Hugh Brontë came from Drogheda. When he was eight years of age an uncle took him from his father's place, intending to make him his heir, as he had no children. But after he went to his uncle's his aunt had a child. Her father then left his uncle, and came to Emdale, and never saw either his mother or uncle again. . . .

This is the story in outline from the aged but dying Alice. She was in no mood at the time to give picturesque details, and Mr. Lusk did not know the full bearing of the declaration, though he kindly reported it.

I notice that Mrs. Heslip confirms my statement as to the Aunt Mary paying a visit to the Brontës in County Down. She adds that she brought her "very purty" daughter with her. This statement regarding the daughter, if accepted, solves the chief difficulty of the story.

Mrs. Heslip now accepts my statement that Patrick Brontë preached in Drumballyrone Church after his ordination. She says she heard it from her mother. But in an interview, reported in the *Heckmondwike Herald* in 1893, she held that he had never returned to Ireland after he went to Cambridge, and she accounted for the alleged fact "partly on account of his dread of the water, and perhaps the superstitious feelings caused by a strange, uncanny fish of huge proportions which followed the ship all through the passage, which proved very stormy." As a matter of fact, Patrick was a frequent visitor for many years at the old home.

Mrs. Heslip, while questioning the story as to Hugh offering diseased potatoes to the Devil, confirms it fully. She helped her uncle,

she says, to gather the diseased potatoes. Why gathered? Some people fed pigs with them; others made starch of them; but most people left them on the ground as useless. She "helped to carry the basket to the Cliff"—the place pointed out by Mr. Ratcliffe, and marked on the plan in my book (p. 123) as the "The Devil's Dining-Room"—and then, when her uncle would say, "There's a mouthful for the Devil," "she would lie down in the field and roar with laughter at the fun provided by her uncle." The fun is not obvious, but others who saw the transaction gazed on it with horror.

Mrs. Heslip partly confirms the story of the ghosts in the glen; but these stories have been fully confirmed and accounted for by a granddaughter of Welsh's in a clever letter to the *Belfast Witness* in 1894.

The story of Hugh's death is given in my book on the oral and written authority of Mr. Hugh Norton, who is still living, and the version put forth by Mrs. Heslip, which I think is true, is also given by me in the book on the authority of Welsh's granddaughter.

In *The Sketch* interview with Mrs. Heslip, previous interviews are referred to. When the first article of my book appeared in *McClure's Magazine*, Mrs. Heslip gave her opinion freely to an interviewer, having only read the review. I sent her the complete article, and Mr. Bingham wrote me in reply: "Mrs. Heslip says the papers that you sent about the fight with Clark and Welsh are true. She heard it all." I was glad of this confirmation at the time; but I now know of three men still living who were spectators of the battle.

When my book was published, Mr. Bingham kindly wrote to me again as follows: "Mrs. Heslip has asked me to say that we have received your book with thanks and read it with interest. A great deal of it she knows to be true. There are some things that she would like to talk to you about."

At our interview she seemed chiefly troubled with regard to the story of her uncle having disposed of Mr. McKee's tea while waiting for his verdict on the newly published "*Jane Eyre*." I gave her the names of two ladies who were present on the occasion, and she only replied, "Och, man, shure yon's not the kind o' thing to put in a book!" I did not dispute the matter of taste with the lady, but pleaded that it was an old anecdote of the manse. Mrs. Heslip does herself injustice by suggesting that there was anything unpleasant in our interview. She certainly seemed to me only to question my discretion in telling the anecdote, and the point in the shillelagh story that troubled her was the magpie's blood used as polish. "Shure, it makes him look like a haythen." Mrs. Heslip never heard the story, and the reason is given at page 249 of my book. "For prudential reasons, Hugh's mission was at first kept secret, and after its failure pride would not permit a reference to it. The adventure was known only to Mr. McKee and the brothers and sisters at home." Mr. McKee kept the secret from all but his wife, and through her it descended to my wife, who was Mr. McKee's daughter, and thus to me. I was on the most friendly terms with Hugh Brontë. He would talk freely about his visits to England, for he had been to Haworth more than once; but I never could extract a word from him, even in his most communicative moods, regarding the wild adventure that ended in failure.

RURAL ADVERTISING.

BY A PHILISTINE.

I weep for Mr. Boulnois' view;
I find Sir Edward's wrath surprising;
Proh pudor! they are blinded to
The use of rural advertising.
The painted board their souls affrights,
Sporadic posters seem a scandal,
And huge sky-signs on mountain heights
The apotheosis of the Vandal.

They know not yet, and never will,
The jaded traveller's jubilation
To meet his own familiar pill
At intervals between each station;
For when the country greets my eyes,
The tempered joy with which it fills me
Is nothing to the glad surprise
With which the flaring poster thrills me.

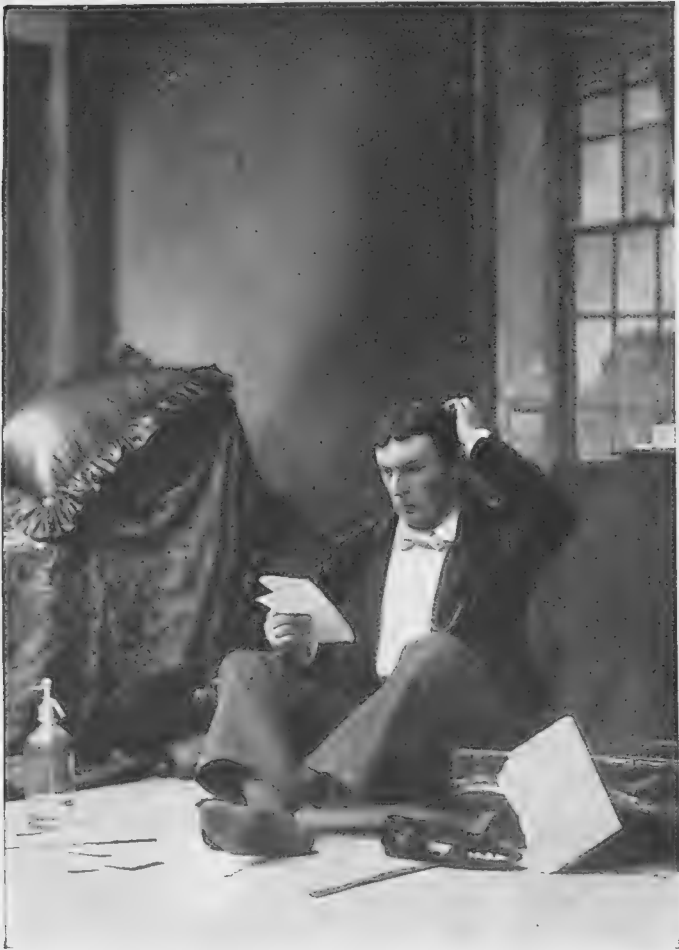
We pass it by with rush and roar,
And in the rapture it induces
I scarce can tell which move me more—
The poster's beauties or its uses.
Yet were it—chance the Dean has missed!—
From Peterborough's gables flaring,
'Twould close the poor subscription list,
And pay the whole cost of repairing.

Then I will sing with grateful heart
A universal benefactor,
And praise the decorative art
Of the Advertisement, Contractor;
And when he meets the eternal doom,
Be there no other hand to grave it,
I'll write upon his honoured tomb—
Nil letiguit quod non ornarit.

M. S.

"A BIT OF OLD CHELSEA," AT THE COURT THEATRE.

Photographs by Alfred Ellis, Upper Baker Street, N.W.



Jack Hillier (Mr. Edmund Maurice), artist, on the eve of his marriage set about destroying the relics of his emotional past.



But Alexandra Victoria Belchamber (Miss Annie Hughes), flower-girl, fainted at his door at that moment, and he carried her into his room.



Alexandra insisted on "stopping the night," and went up the ladder to Hillier's bed, sorely distressed that in her ascent he should see the hole in the heel of her stocking



After the scenes depicted on another page, Alexandra discovered that Jack was to be married; so when he fell asleep she slipped off, leaving a bunch of flowers.



MISS ANNIE HUGHES AS THE FLOWER-GIRL.



His artist friends came in, and Phil M'Donnell (Mr. Martin Harvey), who was not quite himself, discovered Alexandra by her hat, which had been stuck on to a Venus.



Phil forgot himself so far as to hint that, though Jack was to be married, "a man's a man for a' that," and Jack thereon almost choked the jester, much to the delight of Miss Belchamber.

CONCERNING CATS.

The lot of the nineteenth-century cat compares unfavourably with that enjoyed by his ancestors. A feline professor of history, lecturing on past days, when cats were held sacred and when special laws were



"WHO GOES THERE?"

Photo by C. Reid, Wishaw.

as she is a practical addition to the household. Domestic cats vary so widely in colour, size, and conformation that they might fairly claim to be assigned to distinct species. Compare the short, wide head of the Persian with the longer, narrower head of the "common or pantiles" cat, to say nothing of the wide difference in the length and texture of the fur. The unnecessary multiplication of species is a thing by no

means desirable, as tending to attach undue importance to insignificant variations, and so to encumber the work of future investigators; but it does appear as though the Persian and Angola cats might ask to be catalogued by themselves, and distinguished from the short-haired and tailless cats of the Isle of Man and the Crimea, and the kink-tailed cats of Burma, Siam, and Malaya. How the Manx and Burmese varieties have developed their caudal peculiarities, naturalists have suggested no explanation. It would be interesting to learn what advantage accrues from the total lack of a tail, or from a two-inch tail ending in an irregular and stiff bony hook.

No breed of domestic animal displays such variety of coloration; the diversity of coat in the same litter is very singular, and in this connection two well-established facts deserve attention. One is that a true tortoiseshell Tom is almost unknown. There is, I believe, only one authentic instance of a Tom with the fawn coat mottled with black, which the authorities quote as the rule-proving exception. The other fact is that sandy-coloured cats are almost always males, though females with sandy coats have been recorded. This is a curiosity in sex coloration, which deserves the attention of naturalists. It may be worth mentioning that there is a widespread but erroneous idea that the authorities of the Natural History Museum are burning with anxiety to secure a tortoiseshell tom-cat, dead or alive. I am told that about once a week, on the average, year by year, a letter is received from some quarter of

the earth from somebody who has a warranted genuine specimen for sale. The last offer but one came from a gentleman in Cuba; he wanted only ten thousand pounds for his cat, but the Trustees declined it. Few people know the precise shade of colour essential to the variegation known as true tortoiseshell; hence the number of offers to the institution in Cromwell Road. The circumstance that the progeny of a sandy Tom and tortoiseshell Tabby follow the colours of their parents in

enacted for their protection, might be pardoned for sighing over the "good old times." Everybody knows that the early Egyptians held the cat sacred, and many good authorities believe that the Egyptian was the original stock from which the modern domestic species is descended, which tempts the reflection that its title to sanctity has not intensified with the lapse of ages. If the Egyptian cat's lines were cast in pleasant places, the more direct ancestors of our modern pussy had no cause of complaint. Among the ancient laws of Wales was a statute which prohibited the slaughter of a cat under a curious penalty. The owner of the slaughtered animal held it by the tip of the tail, with its nose touching the floor, and the slayer had to give him, by way of compensation, as much wheat as would bury the entire animal out of sight—the decree of poetic justice, perhaps, as representing the quantity of grain the deprived owner might lose by the depredations of vermin ere he succeeded in obtaining another cat. That the animal had distinct economic value in those times is proved by the protective laws which Saxony, Switzerland, and other European countries enacted in favour of cats. Nowadays pussy is a decorative domestic adjunct quite as often



"VANITY."

Photo by Landor, The Mall, Ealing.

due accord with the rule points to the possibility of finding a clue to this law of sex coloration. In size and weight the domestic cat varies very greatly, its development depending much upon food. A Persian Tom, not remarkably large, has just been weighed and measured for the purposes of this article; he scales, as well as could be ascertained (he regarded a seat in the meat-balance with grave suspicion), just under eleven and a-half pounds, and taped thirty-two inches from muzzle to tail-tip (excluding fur), following curves. Mr. Harrison Weir says the

intestine very much shorter than that of the domestic cat—a difference due to the purely animal diet of the former, which made less demand upon its digestion than does its mixed diet upon the digestive apparatus of the latter. It was a plausible theory, and held its ground for a long period; but in course of time it was found that the kittens of parents who had strayed from virtue's path showed this lesser development of the digestive organs! The intestine thus speedily adapted itself to the reduced work it was called upon to perform. And so disappeared the



"SWEET INNOCENCE."

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY MR. GAMBIER BOLTON, F.Z.S.

heaviest cat he ever weighed was twenty-three pounds; rather too heavy to be welcome on one's lap.

The adaptability of the cat renders it one of the most interesting of animals to the biologist. The descendant of a long line of law-abiding and well-conducted cats will yield in a moment to temptation, and, renouncing all the luxuries in which she appeared to revel, on which, indeed, she seemed dependent, will take up her quarters permanently in the woods and pick up a poacher's living at random. The interior economy of the cat is every whit as adaptable as the animal itself. For a long time it was thought that proof of the genuineness of the wild cat (*f. catus*) lay in the fact that undoubted specimens possessed an

one structural difference on which naturalists had relied to distinguish between the true wild cat and the descendants of the feral cat.

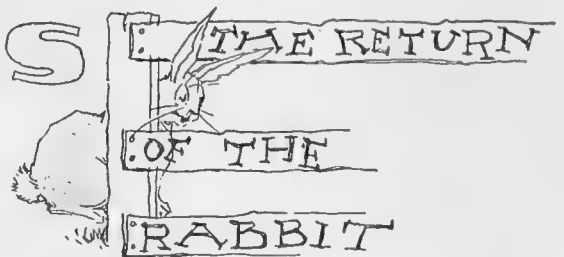
A fish diet, besides being very acceptable to the cat, is said to produce marked beneficial result on the texture of the fur. It was reported a few years ago that an American company had been formed to turn this fact, if it be one, to profitable account. They were going to lease an island, stock it with pure black cats, and feed them entirely upon fish. Stupendous profits were anticipated from sale of the pelts developed under these conditions; but somehow we have not heard anything of the great Black Cat scheme since. Perhaps the cats declined to fall in with the company's views.

C.

THE DUMPIES

FRANK VER-BECK,
DISCOVERER
ALBERT BIGELOW PAINE,
HISTORIAN

[Copyrighted by The Sketch.]



For it is written that whatsoever abideth with the Dumpies shall become of presence squat and manner unwieldy, even as they. THE KAYRAN.

Now, after Commodore had confessed and repented of his treachery to Jolly-boy, he often went forth alone into the woods to meditate, and sometimes found his way to the banks of a small lake, where the Rabbit, who had been his accomplice, came to meet him.

One morning, as they sat there talking, and the Rabbit had asked Commodore for the eighth time if he thought Jolly-boy would serve him up for stew or only cripple him for life if he returned, there was a



sudden cry just over their heads, and he almost fell into the lake with fright. A moment later a tall white fowl stood before them.

"Oh," said the Rabbit, recovering, "it is only the Goose. I thought it was Jolly-boy."

"Humph! and what then?" asked the Goose good-naturedly.

Commodore told the story. The Rabbit wept. The Goose was much interested, and reflected deeply.

"I am on my way North for the summer," he said at last, "and merely stopped here for a little swim. It seems a pleasant neighbourhood, though, and I am impressed with the Dumpy custom of twenty-four meals a-day. By the way, I saw as I came along a large grove of cooky-nut and sugar-plum trees about which I think your Dumpling might wish to learn."

At this the Rabbit danced and stood on his head with joy.

"Oh!" he cried, "if you will let me carry news like that to Jolly-boy and the Dumpling, I am sure they will forgive me entirely, and I shall not be afraid."

Butterneg, the Poet Omelette, has related the rest of this incident in verse.

The Goose then stroked his upper lip,
"Why, certainly," said he,
"And mention to his Dumplingship,
That he might send for me."

Oh, swiftly, then, through field and wood
The hopeful Rabbit flew,
But when before the gates he stood
He trembled through and through;

And long he watched with listening ears,
And long did hesitate,
Before he overcame his fears
And ventured through the gate.

And when at last he got inside
His heart began to whack,
Then stopped dead still, for someone cried,
"Why, here's the Rabbit back!"

Then round about the Dumpies swarmed—
They came from far and near—
The timid Rabbit, much alarmed,
Was quivering with fear;

And when brave Jolly-boy did come,
He cried, on bended knees,
"I've brought you news of sugar-plum
And groves of cooky-trees."

The Dumpies laughed with all their might,
Till field and wood did ring,
Then caught the Rabbit left and right
And dragged him to the King.

And there once more, upon his knees,
His eloquence broke loose—
He told his tale of cooky-trees,
And also of the Goose

The Dumpling every accent
caught.

Then shouted forth in
glee—

"This is the grove we long
have sought!

Come to my arms!" said
he.

And then the Dumpies raised
a din

To celebrate the truce,

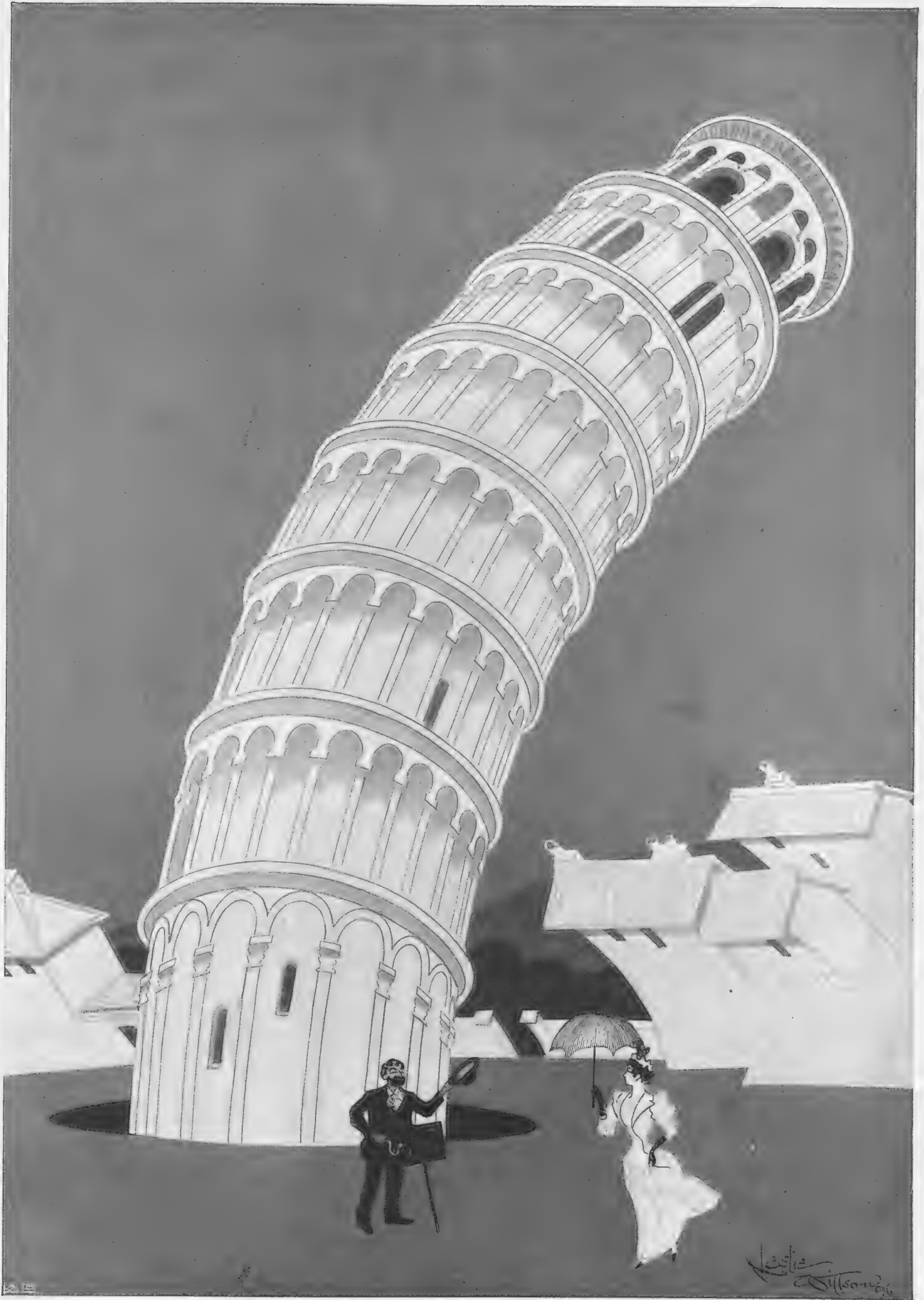
While Commodore came walking in,
And with him was the Goose.

And everyone went wild with joy,
The Bears and 'Possum too.
The Owl, the Goose, and Jolly-boy—
And likewise Topsy-loo.

And thus the Rabbit returned to the Dumpies, and the Goose arrived in the Land of Low Mountains. The Dumpling gave immediate orders that an expedition to the sugar grove should be planned at an early date, and of this adventure we shall hear later.



THE LIGHT SIDE OF NATURE.



THINGS I HAVE NOT SEEN: No. 1.—THE LEANING TOWER OF PISA.



THE MARCH OF TIME.



THE DREGS OF TIME.

THE ART OF THE DAY.

The beautiful Sir Joshua Reynolds of the Dowdeswell Galleries (engraved by R. B. Parkes and etched by Charles Courtrey), entitled "Meditation," and reproduced herewith, ranks among the most elegant and delightful of that great painter's more sentimental vein. The figure, attired in the costume of the period, sits in a bending posture, the head resting dreamily upon the right outstretched hand. The lovely face lies in a "most sweet repose," and the whiteness of the neck contrasts with the dark plait that falls in a curve upon it. It is interesting to remember that the portrait is of Miss Kitty Fisher, who sat to Sir Joshua for many of his subject-pictures. In the original picture the tone is exceptionally rich and golden; the hair is encircled with a blue ribbon, and the dress is embroidered with gold. There cannot be a doubt that, from the point of view of colour, it is in the best style of the man who has been well described as a "divine colourist."

"The Queen of Samothrace," by Mr. W. Graham Robertson, exhibited in the New Gallery and reproduced on this page, reminds one somewhat of the later, curious, mystical style of Mr. T. C. Gotch, and particularly of his "Child Enthroned." Mr. Robertson, however, is a trifle more human and fleshly attractive than Mr. Gotch. The face of his Samothracian Queen is singularly beautiful, but it wants character; you could not find a fault with the details of the face, which in every respect is quite flawless, but too like the face of Tennyson's Maud, "faultily faultless, icily regular, splendidly null, dead perfection, no more"; Maud was "neither savour nor salt," and so is Mr. Robertson's Queen. The real beauty of the picture, and a very genuine beauty it is, consists in the pose of the figure, which has a nameless air of distinction, and which is complete and satisfactory in its elegant ease and restfulness. Herein is to be found the curious dignity of the whole, which is, however, obvious at a first glance.

The Queen has permitted the President of the Royal Society of Painters in Water-Colours, Pall Mall East, to wear a Collar and Badge when attending her Majesty's Levées, or on such other occasions as may be considered fitting. The Badge has been designed and executed by Professor Hubert Herkomer, R.A., and is of solid gold, oval in shape, and supports a female figure carved in ivory. Above this and attached to the chain is a gold wreath encircling the Royal Crown, to which the Badge is linked.

The announcement by Mr. Balfour in the House of Commons the other day, in answer to a question, that the Wallace Collection had been bequeathed to the nation will be received with extreme gratification in

every quarter. Under what conditions the splendid inheritance has been given to England for its own is apparently not yet known; at any rate, on this particular occasion Mr. Balfour was not able to state those



MEDITATION.—SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

The property of Messrs. Dowdeswell, and now on view at their Galleries, New Bond Street, W.

conditions with any certainty. The broad fact must be enough for the time being. Moreover, there seems to be some doubt still as to the value of this glorious collection, which has been declared in some quarters to be worth a million and a half, in others as much as three millions and a half. We must wait also for further details as to this point, and, as has been said, be content with the broad fact that England has received through this gift probably the richest and most beautiful artistic inheritance that any nation has ever received.

An exhibition of the late Samuel Bird's work at 175, New Bond Street, has a passing interest. Its chief plum—if so irreverent a word may be permitted—is the last work which the painter accomplished, his portrait of Mr. Gladstone. Whatever the merits of the picture may be, and it has merits, it was a pity, perhaps, to issue a circular dealing with its merits from the symbolic point of view. Mr. Gladstone, in the picture, stands on the terrace of the National Liberal Club, looking at the Houses of Parliament, "shrouded," says the circular, "in a soft mist, as if to convey the idea that the scene of his labours is left behind." Moreover, "a quiet sunlight bathes everything," to symbolise that "hope and confidence and the influence of a noble life can never die." And so forth, and so forth. Surely it is a pity to make conscientious work in itself, apart from even intentional symbolism, look ridiculous.

Apart from these pretensions, the picture assuredly has a distinction of its own; the accessories are quite good; there is excellent selection, a delicate sense of colour, and a gentle refinement about the whole treatment of the landscape; it is the figure itself which lacks distinction; it does not give the impression of solidity and massiveness which the painter had evidently intended to convey. As a London scene, the work has charm and refinement. As an achievement in portraiture, it is painfully inferior. The same remark applies to the merits of the whole exhibition; in Mr. Bird's landscape, particularly of the South, he had a sense of colour and of atmosphere which was wholly admirable; as a figure-painter he was as nearly naught as a man of his abilities could easily be.



THE QUEEN OF SAMOTHRACE.—W. GRAHAM ROBERTSON.
Exhibited at the New Gallery.

[Copyright Reserved.]

**This page is missing from the print copy used for digitization.
A replacement will be provided as soon as it becomes available.**

**This page is missing from the print copy used for digitization.
A replacement will be provided as soon as it becomes available.**

ARISTOPHANES AND SHAKSPERE AT OXFORD.

Under the energetic leadership of Mr. Philip Comyns Carr, the Oxford University Dramatic Society has this year left behind its habit of presenting one play for a week's run, and has been giving "The Knights" of Aristophanes and Shakspeare's "Taming of the Shrew" at alternate performances. In making so bold an innovation the club certainly did not overrate its strength, for, although but three or four players took part in both productions, the larger cast of the Shaksperian play stood in no need of improvement by the accession of other names from the Greek play-bill. With the Græco-Cretan Question absorbing public attention, and the evening papers getting rather mixed in their insistence upon the sacred associations of Greek literature for the British householder, it was certainly the time for the revival of a Greek play, though it is to be feared that, if the O.U.D.S. were to transfer its very spirited production of "The Knights" to the boards of a London theatre, Aristophanes would hardly be able to hold his own in this degenerate age against Mr. Henry Dam or Mr. Owen Hall. Yet, in spite of the fact that "The Knights" is a political burlesque teeming with topical allusions which belong to the Athens of 424 B.C., there is so much of the true spirit of extravagant comedy in the play that it cannot fail to amuse, even in this year of grace 1897, in the hands of capable actors.

And there is quite a striking amount of talent in the present O.U.D.S. Company. As the low-born sausage-seller who succeeds in ousting the demagogue Cleon (burlesqued in the very year after his victory at Sphacteria with no Admiral Field to protest!) from the favour of the foolish old man Demos, the personification of the Athenian populace, Mr. H. M. Woodward played with a broad humour which was extremely effective. The man's smug complacency when he is assured that the oracles predict his triumph, the fertility of his resource in the scene of his hand-to-hand match with Cleon in the wooing of the old man's favour with offerings of clothes and food, and the vulgar pomposity of his ultimate triumph and exhibition of Demos, "stewed up" from old age into a second youth and gorgeously appparelled, were all realised with genuine comic force. As Cleon, the Tanner, Mr. Paul Rubens presented no less clever a study, fulfilled with vehement intensity in the earlier stages of the contest, and with the tragic despair of a proud, overbearing nature in the hour of defeat. Mr. Oldershaw's rendering of the feeble dotage of Demos was somewhat painfully grotesque. As the Coryphæus Lord Suirdale was duly impressive, save for a tendency to get somewhat out of tune, and the Chorus of Knights, representing the Conservatives of the day, convulsed the house by its arrival on hobby-horses, and did justice to Mr. Bussell's ingenious music, with its dexterous reminiscences



of well-known songs, Old-English and up-to-date. But surely the Knights were, to a man, unhappy in their make-up, which was far too pink-and-white, and in their wigs, which were too wiggly. The garb was that of ancient Athens (or something like it), but complexion and coiffure were those of the modern pantomime boy or costume-play super. Mr. Philip Comyns Carr, who "produced" both plays, is to be congratulated on the ingenuity of much of the stage "business," necessarily evolved without the aid of the traditions which belong to less ancient drama.

"The Taming of the Shrew," which shared the week's programme with "The Knights," was noteworthy for a freshness of treatment in the stage-management which gave it a material difference alike from Mr. Augustin Daly's production and from that of Mr. F. R. Benson. The induction was retained, but the whole of the Pedant episode towards the close of the play was discarded. Much of the "business" of the play was novel and appropriate, and the best scene, a public square in Padua lying on rising ground from which the quaint streets in the background sloped gradually downwards, was extremely picturesque. In this square, before, instead of inside, the house of Baptista, was laid

THE TAMING OF THE SHREW.

Katharina
Miss MorrisPetruchio
Mr. Comyns CarrDemos
Mr. Macintosh

the animated scene of the wedding-party's return from the church and the blustering bridegroom's stormy exit with his reluctant bride.

"The Taming of the Shrew" is a difficult, touch-and-go sort of play to act, but the performers got through very creditably on the whole. Mr. Comyns Carr made a vigorous and dashing Petruchio. In the more violent scenes he was surprisingly good. What his performance lacked was the underlying quiet and high spirits of the man who, confident in the strength of his own will and the wisdom of his method, really enjoys the wordy warfare of his wooing. Miss Marion Morris played Katharina with plenty of spirit at the outset, and with due womanly submissiveness at the close, and Miss Mabel Terry-Lewis endowed Bianca with a natural charm and grace which were delightfully Terryesque, if one may coin such a word. One of the most successful scenes was that of Bianca's lessons in Latin and music. Most of the other parts were appropriately played, Lord Suirdale again distinguishing himself as Christopher Sly, the drunken tinker of the induction.

"THE DESTROYING ANGEL."

Mr. Mulholland's speech at the Playgoer's Club concerning the suburban theatres seems to have had a prodigious effect, for on the next evening, when I went to the Brixton playhouse, I found quite a large proportion of the dramatic critics gathered together, despite the appalling weather, for the first night of Mr. Seudamore's play, "The Destroying Angel," a work which, if rumour be true, nearly had the honour of being presented by Mr. E. S. Willard. The theatre, as I have already noted, is a well-built and handsomely furnished house, and exceedingly comfortable, and the piece was mounted in a style that would have done credit to many of the West End theatres. Mr. Seudamore seems rather to be a skilful concocter than inventor. His work apparently will have immense success, for, while the elements are hardly novel, the combination is new and effective, and it had many thrilling moments. The most thrilling were due to a Mr. Charles Stone, who was a humorously grim, blood-thirsty convict, and acted very ably. The company is capital, the most successful work being that of Mr. Austen Lee as Satan—called Mr. Orcus—and Miss Agnes Hewitt, who charmed the house by her performance as the heroine. I shall not be surprised if this excellent melodrama, after a successful tour in the provinces, finds its way to a West End Theatre.

THE LITERARY LOUNGER.

For half a century Jokai has been pouring out romances in Hungary, but it is only a few years since we heard of him for the first time. Now his novels are being gradually translated; English journalists interview him; magazine articles deal with his long and varied career in literature and politics. In his own country his fame is enormous, but it is far from being purely literary. There mingle with it gratitude for his political services and admiration for the vigour which is seen, week in, week out, year after year, producing and producing, and losing no interest in life. To judge by the reception which his books have received in many quarters among us, it would seem as if we transferred all this floating popularity to his literary work, which is not very exact criticism. The book most recently translated into English, "The Green Book" (Jarrold), is a fair sample of his powers. Its vigour is magnificent, its profusion of incident and character could only come from a rich nature; the generosity of its tone stirs one's heart. But it is not great literature. It is at once the production of a cultivated student of human nature, and very like

But it is the way of generous young hero-worshippers to believe, and demand that everybody else shall believe, that their heroes were admirable in every relation of life, or would have been if only this world had behaved decently to them. Smollett's career is full of interest for the student of letters, and his latest biographer has been a diligent searcher among contemporary records and more recent lives and essays. He supplies all the stuff necessary for a calm appreciation of this writer of tremendous vitality, if the reader be only patient enough to weed away the clumsy rhetoric from the sober facts. And his treatment of Smollett's weaknesses is a real lesson in charity. "Impatient without doubt he was," says this kind young defender, "but by no means in larger measure than Carlyle, Tennyson, Goethe, or Schiller, and the feeling is wrongly defined as impatience. It is rather the desire to give less intellectually nimble companions a fillip up in the race, that they may not lag so far behind as to make intercourse a martyrdom."

Mr. Gosse has again reprinted his "Seventeenth Century Studies" (Heinemann). It was first published as long ago as 1883, and one, at least, of the studies it includes dates from nearly ten years before that.



Drawn by Mr. J. B. W. W. W.

"What has the Britishness progressed, I suppose you didn't tell him that you loved me?"
 "Oh yes, I did." But he was great enough to say it wouldn't make any difference."

And the maharajah. His use of the specter of off strong contrasts of black and white, is barbarous; and the story is only readable because of its tremendous "go." As a matter of fact, it is very readable. The Russia of the early part of this century, with its great and its best society, seemed by this against authority, is excellent material for this powerful writer, at once so fond of exact documents and of high-flown sentiment. Perhaps we may come near to approximating Jokai's rank among novelists if we say that in his tone he resembles no familiar writer so much as Mr. Robert Buchanan, and in fertility none has rivaled him save Alexandre Dumas.

The turn for Tobias Smollett has now come among the "Famous Scots" (Oxford). The writer of the monograph, Mr. Ophiant Smeaton, is young and fervent, and, therefore, a little extravagant in eulogy; but perhaps there is something to be said for his railing off the author of "Humphrey Clinker" third among the "Famous Scots" of literature. Smollett has had intellectual and humorous appreciation in abundance before now, but never so much affectionate enthusiasm. Mr. Smeaton's apologies are rather desperate at times, for Smollett was essentially a disagreeable person, whatever may have been his genius.

It represents some of his very youthful work; but he has not thought well to re-write even the passages that seem to his later judgment over-fluent. "I have not attempted to put old wine into a new bottle, since who knows that the enthusiasm of youth may not have been better advised than the sobriety of middle life?" The differences, then, between this edition and the first are very few indeed: but one deserves grateful mention—the index compiled by Mr. R. J. Lister. These papers on Webster and Menck, Crishaw, Cowley, Oway, and a few others, were, the writer says, done like "all critical work nowadays, on the principle of the coral insect." But Mr. Gosse's "atom on the mass" of exact information is not what we are most grateful for. Whatever he has aimed at in his critical work, what he has reached, is a power of humanly interesting his readers in the personalities and the thought and the manner of speech of men whose works may be reprinted ten times in a generation, but will remain strangers to our unadventurous and unsocial habits of reading, unless they are presented by some such go-between as Mr. Gosse. There is a great deal to be said about Crishaw beyond what is to be found in this study; but what is here what the curiosity, and must make a few new forgers of libraries, and even purchasers of classics. Q. Q.

**This page is missing from the print copy used for digitization.
A replacement will be provided as soon as it becomes available.**

**This page is missing from the print copy used for digitization.
A replacement will be provided as soon as it becomes available.**

OUR LADIES' PAGES.

SACKCLOTH AND ASHES.

This week my ideas will not rise one half-inch above the dead-level of *demi-saison* modes. Lent is upon us, and the stagnation of social life therefore complete. Everyone who can and could has fled from the unfriended horrors of a London March—the most unfashionable month of the year, as it has come to be considered in town—and the lull in fashion-mongering is only on a par with the general surrounding monotone of existence for those who can neither betake themselves to the sun-haunted Riviera or adjacent smiling Italy. In Paris, of course, inventors of coming modes are very busy planning, arranging, concocting, or condemning the styles which variously suggest themselves for the coming season. But the results of these preliminary labours are not made known to the general public until Easter is well in view and the time for spring-shopping has arrived. The very smart Parisienne affects, indeed, a certain penitential garb of soft greys and drabs and mauves at this particular time of Lent, and fish dietary; but we on this side of the Channel are less attuned to such sartorial cadences than our dainty Gallic neighbours, who are born to the instinctive habit of an appropriate exterior. So we solidly await the departure of one season for the advent of another before beginning the upheaval of the wardrobe, never noticing the *nuances* of such intermediate occasions as sombre Lent which are so picturesquely and demurely observed abroad.

The fur bodice, in which we have so far securely and becomingly resisted wintry weather, is still a smart and useful protection against those bitter, biting winds of March, which are, to my thinking, the most unpardonable sin of this cruel climate. I have seen one made entirely of chinchilla, which was included in the trousseau of a last-week's bride. This bodice, made quite tight-fitting, lined with Nile-green satin, had a jewelled belt of silver filigree and turquoise. The sleeves, of grey velvet to match the skirt, were long and tight-fitting. Nothing more "elegant," to use an Americanism, than the entire costume could well have been achieved, and in it the most due east wind might blow its very best, or worst, without affecting the health and comfort of the wearer. The tight-fitting fur bodice is decidedly the most sheltering as well as smartest outdoor garment



[Copyright.]

PRINCESS EVENING-DRESS OF MAUVE MOIRÉ OPENING OVER
CIEL-BLEU SATIN BROCADE.

we have yet discovered or adopted. Capes, as people are beginning to realise, are responsible for much of the rheumatised shoulders and neuralgic joints to which women have been lately prone—our shoulders and arms generally are so much more exposed than when covered by the protecting jacket-sleeve. I suppose nobody ever thought of this while big sleeves reigned supreme and capes were a necessity—not that it

would have mattered, for common sense may be strong, but fashion is stronger, as the history of nations can prove. Meanwhile, now that the subsidence of sleeves has paved a way for the re-entrance of jackets, everybody has all at once discovered that the cape has been a serious if



[Copyright.]

A PRETTY HAT.

somewhat seductive error, and that our only possible form is the jacket, at once jaunty and judicious, from the hygienic and all other points of view.

Many of the new cloth skirts, which are, of course, a necessity until the weather grows warmer, have developed a tendency to ornamentation in keeping with the present movement by being cut into openworked patterns, more or less elaborate, around the hem. Bands of satin in one or more colours show from underneath, and the pattern is, moreover, sometimes elaborately embroidered with paillettes, gold cord, or parti-coloured silks. I do not greatly like the idea. It was brought out about two seasons back for capes. But it never quite caught on. Still, it is one of several new modes, and, as such, to be considered by those who pride themselves in being of the first flight or last cry—which is it?—of inexorable, expensive, and irresponsible fashion.

I have already spoken of the Princess robe which is promised us among many other revivals. Whether it will become a thing accomplished among modish women remains to be seen. But the fashion-makers generally know how to manage these matters, and when a new departure is to be launched the *modus operandi* is to get some well-known *mondaine* (and there have even been occasions when this common noun has had a prefix) to negotiate the new style by appearing in it publicly. And, as novelty and notoriety will always have an attentive following, the thing in this way is somehow practically completed. An example of this same Princess skirt, which has been selected for present illustration, is one of the newest developments in that once popular mode, carried out in a combination of colouring, which rages fiercely in Paris at the present moment, and which moreover promises to be a leading favourite in "tones" with us at this side of the Channel. I hope it may not be considered very diffuse if I enter into particulars of its component parts exactly as they were communicated to me by a great man-milliner at the Seine side. As will be seen, the bodice is only half *décolletée*—a sensible innovation which much prevails at present—and is made of a soft shade of *ciel-bleu* moiré velours, irregularly covered with satin spots in the same tone. The fulness, gradually increasing from hips to end of skirt, is very apparent behind, where the skirt stands out in well-formed godets. Both bodice and skirt open in front over a lovely shade of mauve satin brocade, which is richly embroidered with gold and silver spangles. The combination of shades is perfect, and emphasised by the skilful manner in which butterfly-bows of the blue moiré are crossed both on corsage and skirt. Round the bottom a wide ruche of mauve tulle closely pressed together carries out this delicate duet of tones, the edges being run with tiny blue satin bébé-ribbon. Over the shoulders comes a filmy drapery of crinkled chiffon, edged with ruchings of *point d'esprit* net. Small bouillonnées of spangled, embroidered, pale-blue satin brocade and mauve moiré form the sleeves, a black brush aigrette in the hair, black gloves, fan, shoes, and openwork silk stockings completing this really fascinating scheme of colour.

At the Grand Military Meeting at Sandown on Friday and Saturday the show of smart frocks, as may be readily understood, was variously fascinating, weather notwithstanding. It truly seems the merest vanity and affliction of spirit to take a March day in trust in the matter of clothes, and yet what lovely stray glimpses of spring sunshine force themselves in here and there through the prevailing rigours of our unforgivably awful spring climate! I suppose the poets thought all their very poetical licence justified because of such occasional "pet days" of soft zephyrs and light

sunbeams; but experience teaches that, however desirable spring may sound and seem in a calf-bound volume of metrical verse, its reality hath a too eager and nipping air for permanent outdoor satisfaction. Yet was Sandown not altogether ill-treated in its accessories, and the many gallant defenders of their country who, as usual, foregathered at Esher last week doubtless found compensation for the rigours of a tempestuous week-end in the excellent sport, and still more the millinery blandishments provided for this very favourite occasion. One of the prettiest hats of many present on Saturday I have had illustrated for the benefit of curious womanhood generally. It was worn by a well-known Society beauty, and quite carried off the palm of becomingness from all other competing hats, capotes, and headgear present. Sapphire-blue velvet, in colour to match the dress it was worn with, the crown made high and edged around with black ostrich-feather trimming. This fluffy garniture also edged the brim, but so judiciously that all appearance of heaviness was avoided. Very much turned up on the left side, and held in place by two handsome buckles of emerald and turquoise and jet, the hat was trimmed with a cluster of rich ostrich-feathers—six was, I think, the number—while a muff, very smartly tricked out in materials to match, was worn with it. At Sandown I also saw the entirely charming original of this other sketch, which forcibly appealed to my taste as one of the prettiest “altogethers” on the lawn.



[Copyright.]

AT THE GRAND MILITARY MEETING.

The skirt, of violet cloth, was surmounted by a fascinating arrangement in velvet of a deeper shade, what the French call “hortensia”—a sort of red-purple, most becoming, it should be added, to brunettes. This little mantle, made loose at the sides, formed a bolero to the waist at back, with the addition of a dainty basque. It seemed to make a pleated cape at shoulders, moreover, which greatly added to its *chic*. Epaulettes of cream lace over these matched the chemisette of cream mousseline-de-soie, which had a pretty frill of lace down the centre. The collar, quite exceptionally smart, was made of frills of mousseline-de-soie again, with an inner gather of lace. A black velvet toque in soft gathers was worn with the mantle, the bow of black moiré ribbon at left holding a group of black and white ostrich-plumes in place, among which a Paradise-plume floated gaily.

From friends at Biarritz I hear of a gay group of dances which occupied every evening for a week preceding Ash Wednesday. Mrs. Slater's costume-ball on Thursday brought everybody in full fig and feather to the Villa Blanche, and on the following night a great success was achieved by the Misses Morris and Crosbie, who had arranged to give their most festive party at the Casino. Not a ticket remained unsold for the charity fête held next evening at the Grand Hotel, and I am told the cotillon favours for the dance that followed were really worth having, a remark that does not always apply to these souvenirs. Lady Fairbairn has arrived at her delightful villa, Trois Fontaines, and will, it is expected, enliven the Lenten season by one of

those much-appreciated entertainments which annually occur within her hospitable gates at this season.

Thursday's débutantes must truly have suffered for their loyalty, and still more those who “attended” the Drawing-Room, for they did not even have the excitement of a first experience to compensate them for the chilling blasts which swept the Mall and penetrated through the crevice of any but an air-tight carriage. I went on to see one or two veiled and feathered damsels in the afternoon. They looked blue about the chin and elbows when they got back, poor things, and seemed to want tea and a glimpse of the fire more than any other gift of Fortune that could possibly be offered them. So much for attending a March Drawing-Room. Give me the balmy skies of April or May under which to make my salaams to royalty; the fortitude which could have supported Thursday's cutting atmosphere is not mine. At one of the tea-taking functions which followed I met a charming sacque-shaped jacket of stone-coloured velvet—or, more properly perhaps, light drab—which came straight from Paris, and, as an illustration of a very new style, is worth quoting here. First of all, the velvet formed a box-pleat down the centre of front and back, starting from a square yoke of heavily embroidered satin in a similar shade. Down each side of these central pleats were others which were ornamented with groups of strass and turquoise buttons. Embroidered epaulettes and collar-band with a Medici arrangement of satin and sable-tails added one attraction to another of this dainty sacque coat. The gigot sleeves, with turned-back Mousquetaire cuffs, were lined with bright-pink satin, as was the garment throughout. Though not constitutionally partial to sacque-backs, I must admit this glorified version quite subjugated my best affections.

Rome is receiving fresh recruits every day—I mean, be it understood, from the travelling point of view—and the number of visitors who have already ordered rooms for Easter and Holy Week breaks, *on dit*, all previous records of Eternal City trippers. Up to the rigorously observed “Black Wednesday,” festivities were in full swing, and from friends wintering among the Seven Hills I hear about sheaves of festivities, one of the last and best being that given by the Contessa della Porta Rodaini, a well-known figure in Roman society, whose pretty villa is the central rendezvous of a carefully selected “set.” Contessa Santucci, Baroness Wagner, Colonel and Mrs. Graham, Marchesa Lucifero, and Mr. Sargent were among the guests whom the hostess received in a wonderful frock of silver-grey brocade, the train and bodice of which were outlined with pink velvet roses.

The bicycle wedding, which attracted some attention in town last week by reason of a bridal party in full panoply of satin and veils appearing in Piccadilly on Sunday morning, has now been outdone in point of novelty by a Parisian bride who was borne to the Church of Sainte Marie des Batignolles last Sunday in an automobile Victoria “très élégante,” as an onlooker informs me. There now remains only the balloon for the bride who wants to make an original never-done-before mode of progress towards the Hymeneal altar. All other methods seem to have been disposed of.

Talking of bicycles, I see that the Princess of Wales, with Princess Victoria and other royal ladies, visited the gymnasium at Alexandra House, Kensington Gore, last week, which is presided over by Miss Stuart Snell, who has made such a revolution in the fine art of bicycle-riding by means of the musical drill and other picturesque manœuvres which have been introduced under her auspices. The Princess was greatly charmed by the different exercises, several of which were repeated at her desire. To Miss Stuart Snell we, in fact, owe the æsthetic aspect of bicycling, as those who were present at the Ranelagh Club Saturday afternoons of last season will realise. For the coming summer ides I hear all modish bikes will be either white or pale mauve. Very charming, of course, for fair women, but how about the brunettes? I really think she might be allowed to order hers a sealing-wax red.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

GILLYFLOWER (Mayfair).—(1) If you want to be very much in the latest fashion use cambric handkerchiefs entirely black. A hideous fashion, I think, but still most modish. The best man in town for all these niceties of the toilette is Lee, of Wigmore Street. He will also send you the black Suède gloves with gussets which fit to a miracle. (2) As you are passing through Paris, call at 273, Rue Saint Honoré; they have the loveliest underlinen, and it is done by reduced ladies at low prices; so, besides outfitting yourself with all possible daintiness, you would be helping a cause as well. (3) I know the ladies' club you mention, but it has no prestige.

IMPATIENT (Chatham).—(1) It is not such a bad climate, I hear from friends in the Service who have been there, always provided due care is observed in diet. About two hundred English. Very little dressing. Thin flannels and silk should be worn next the skin, as it is more a damp heat than otherwise. (2) Benoist will serve you a dainty little supper, and save all trouble. He can send men to wait, besides silver, glass, and all accessories, if you choose.

TRA-LA-LA (Kildare).—(1) Just so; but, if you must use the animal, it is more humane to treat him to a sponge-lined saddle. (2) I forget the number, but Oxford Street will find him. (3) Have you thought of the Ladies' County Club? It is a most useful house for countrywomen. Hanover Square is the locale.

SYBIL.

The Great Northern Railway Company have again issued a very handy book containing lists of the principal dog and poultry shows, cattle and horse fairs, racing fixtures, and agricultural shows for 1897. The list is produced in convenient pocket form, and copies may be obtained gratis on application to the Superintendent of the Line, King's Cross Station, Great Northern Railway, or to the company's provincial agents.

CITY NOTES.

The next Settlement begins on March 24.

MONEY.

There is still a marked discrepancy between the Bank of England discount rate and the rates current in the open market for money, but it does not seem likely that the Bank directors will reduce their official minimum so long as the political horizon remains overcast. Politics are overshadowing everything financial, including the discount market, and we imagine we should not be far wrong if we applied the converse also—that finance is dominating politics.

THE SITUATION.

As we write the markets are all gloomy and depressed, while Consols are below 111. For an hour or so the story in the *Daily Chronicle* that arrangements had been made between the Powers and Greece strengthened every department; but at the close the "yarn" appeared so improbable that it was discredited, and gloom again overspread the whole Stock Exchange. How completely the situation is dominated by political considerations was, however, conclusively shown by the change of tone which took place when the story was first circulated.

To write with any useful purpose on the position of the Stock Markets three days before our remarks reach the readers of *The Sketch* in such times as these is quite futile, for events move very rapidly, and the prospects of peace and war shift so fast as to render any general remarks written on a Saturday quite out of date on the following Wednesday. We can tell our readers with some confidence that, in high political circles, the advance of spring and the melting of the snow in the Balkans are looked upon with very grave anxiety. If the whole peninsula can be kept from breaking out into a general blaze during the next three months, all will probably be well; but can it?

THE CALEDONIAN DIVIDEND.

A sharp fall took place in Coras on the announcement of the Caledonian dividend at the rate of 5 per cent. Although this was the rate anticipated by the people in the North, it was confidently expected on the markets here that a slightly better distribution would be made. Added to this disappointment, a rumour was circulated to the effect that there was a probability of a fresh issue of £750,000 capital. When that was officially, though somewhat tardily, contradicted, the "bears" in Glasgow were still undefeated. Glasgow has been consistently bearish, and London bullish. When the disappointing dividend came out, the London "bulls" reckoned on "bear" repurchases, and kept on buying. But Glasgow still continued to supply them with as much stock as they wanted, and the prevailing market idea is that the Glasgow people still have a trump card of some kind to play.

DOVER "A."

A lively market during the past week has been that in Dover "A," or, to give it its full title, the Deferred Ordinary Stock of the South-Eastern Railway Company. It is not by any means out of the way now for that stock to fluctuate a couple of points in a day. The company is doing fairly well, but the present activity seems to be based mainly on the optimistic views as to the Kent coalfields. The shares of that interesting enterprise are now quoted 5, and the people at the back of them appear determined to keep them up, possibly in view of the issue of a new company. Except as a gambling counter, and probably even as such, we think it advisable to avoid these shares.

MR. MCKINLEY'S MESSAGE.

In unqualified terms, the new President of the United States has reaffirmed the principle which brought him into prominence as a politician. The bulk of the revenue is to be derived from duties on the importation of foreign goods. Of course, his will is not law, and the problem has yet to be solved as to how far he can enforce his views on Congress. But that an increase of tariff must be looked for is tolerably certain. When a definite measure to that end is placed before Congress, we shall doubtless witness a repetition of what occurred when the famous original McKinley Tariff was under discussion. The most apt of concrete illustrations is that of the Welsh tin-plate business. American importers bought largely in order to have big stocks in hand when the new tariff became operative, and as soon as it took effect there was a very serious reaction. It will not be tin-plates this time, but it behoves students of our trade conditions and of our Home Railway progress to carefully watch every indication of the direction in which the shoe is going to be made to pinch us on this side of the Atlantic.

THE MINING MARKET.

In common with other markets, the mining department generally has been dominated by the Cretan Question, which has led to a decline all round. Kaffirs in particular have suffered, for, in addition to Eastern affairs, they have had to contend against the disturbing influence at work in connection with the deadlock at present existing between the Transvaal Government and the High Courts. In view of the unsettled condition of affairs, very little business of a speculative kind is being transacted, operators, both professional and amateur, preferring to await the dispersal of some of the dangerous-looking clouds that are at present hovering about. Rand Mines were specially selected for attack, owing to a combination of circumstances. In the halcyon days of the Kaffir boom these shares were very dangerous to tackle on the "bear" tack. They

did not move by fractions, but by a point or two at a time. But, now that excitement has died out of the market, the case is different. Though the Paris Settlement passed off tranquilly, it is an open secret that there was a considerable amount of liquidation necessary, and that these particular shares were pretty freely unloaded. People "in the know" took advantage of this to sell "bears," so that the fall which took place had a composite origin. It is a mistake to assume, as has been done in some quarters, that it was merely a "bear" attack. The actual sales were on a large scale, and mainly from Paris.

The most important event in the West Australian Market is the announcement that rich ore has been found in the Great Boulder Mine at three hundred feet. The fact is of great importance, and should do much to put fresh heart into all the Hannan's properties, especially if the new discovery develops into something of any magnitude. Until now it has been doubtful if the rich deposits of Kalgoorlie would continue in depth, and wise men shook their heads and talked about the gold not living in the granite. If the new development in the Boulder settles this question, there will be hope for even the most unpromising of the Hannan's leases.

INTERNATIONALS.

The market in International stocks has kept wonderfully quiet during all the exciting events arising out of the Cretan crisis. Nobody cared to engage in important commitments until it was seen whether the Paris Settlement was tided over without disaster. There was no open default in Paris; but we gather that assistance had to be rendered to more than one professional operator. At all events, there was a considerable amount of liquidation emanating from Paris, and, of course, its effect was reflected on the London Market.

NATIONAL TELEPHONE.

National Telephone shares, particularly the preferences, are rather out of favour at present on account of the announcement made in the House of Commons by Mr. Hanbury that the Government has no intention of buying up the company's business, and will, therefore, give no notice to purchase, which it has the power to do, on or before June 30, 1897. Moreover, Mr. Hanbury gave his assent to the statements made by Mr. Arnold Morley in a letter to the *Times* on July 9, 1894, which letter contained, *inter alia*, the following words: "On the termination of the licence in December 1911 the right of the National Telephone Company to carry on telephone exchange business will cease and determine. All they will have to sell will be their plant, and even this the Government will be under no obligation to buy. It is pretty well established, though it may be made a matter for litigation, that, in the event of the business being bought out by the Government, it would be *ultra vires* to pay out the Preference shareholders over par. Assuming this opinion to be correct, as it is understood to be, what is the position of Preference shareholders? The First and Second Preferences are both quoted at round about £16 for the £10 share, which is equivalent to £160 for £100 stock. The 6 per cent. dividend during the fifteen years would amount on ten shares to £90, and at the end of that period the shareholder would lose £60, leaving only £30 as his net dividend, or only 2 per cent. per annum on the present purchase-price. It is considerations like these that are depressing the market in National Telephone stocks.

LONDON AND GLOBE FINANCE.

It would be very interesting to know the inner history of the difficulties which have arisen between the London and Globe Finance and the London and Paris Exploration Companies. So far as we can make out, the London and Globe guaranteed at par £250,000 in new shares of the London and Paris Exploration. When the issue of new shares was offered to the shareholders, the old shares were quoted at a discount, and consequently the issue was a failure, with the result that the London and Globe was allotted nearly the whole of the issue. There are all sorts of complications in connection with the matter; but the probabilities appear to be that a court of law will have to finally settle them, and we shall be treated to some very interesting details of the inner working of these finance-promotion concerns.

WEST AUSTRALIAN (GOLD DISTRICT) TRADING.

The investigation by the Official Receiver into the affairs of the West Australian (Gold District) Trading Corporation has resulted in some very serious disclosures. At the meeting of the contributories, held on Thursday last, for the purpose of deciding whether the shareholders wished an application made to the Court to appoint a liquidator other than the Official Receiver, and to appoint a committee of inspection, the chairman presented to the meeting a short sketch of the company's career. It appears that the Corporation was formed for the purpose of taking over the assets and liabilities of a syndicate, which, at its statutory meeting held in June last year, declared a dividend at the rate of 100 per cent. per annum. The Official Receiver created no small sensation by informing the meeting that at the time the dividend was declared, and up to the time the prospectus of the Corporation was issued, not one penny-piece of profit had been realised by the syndicate. This is a very serious statement, as it was, doubtless, on the strength of this dividend that shares were subscribed for in the new company. The only explanation which the Official Receiver appears to have elicited from the directors is that in declaring the dividend they *hoped* that that profit would be realised. There was also a curious incident about a request for

bogus telegrams having been sent to the other side which was not properly cleared up.

Who can wonder that the meeting was a stormy one? Mr. Goodman and the other late officers of the company had a very bad reception, while charges of fraud and reminiscences of the great Jabez Balfour were freely indulged in. No doubt a most searching examination of everybody concerned with the inception of the company and its parent syndicate will be held by the senior Official Receiver, and pending such an inquiry it would be indecent to express any opinion as to the merits of the case. From the figures presented to the creditors, who had a separate and comparatively quiet meeting, it appears that, while there will be little for the shareholders, there is enough to pay the company's debts in full, or almost so.

COSTA RICA RAILWAY.

A considerable amount of attention has recently been devoted to the Ordinary shares of this company, on account of the evidence of an improved position shown in the recent brilliant traffic returns. Though the improvement in receipts has been sensational, the price has not hitherto responded in proportion. We understand that this is due to certain transactions arising out of the Murrieta liquidation. It appears that a certain bank held a large number of the shares as collateral security, and took advantage of the improving traffics and the free market to realise. It is understood, however, that the block of shares thus hanging over the Market and retarding the rise has now been disposed of.

HARROD'S STORES.

In the Miscellaneous Market a great deal of attention has been devoted to the shares of Harrod's Stores, Limited. The issue of new capital was made a point of by the "bears," who predicted that it would not be taken up. They were, however, mistaken, as events turned out, and the issue was a triumphant success—so triumphant indeed that outsiders appear to have fared rather badly as regards getting allotments. The announcement of the new issue induced some "bear" sales, and the sellers have had rather an uncomfortable time. The market looks fairly strong now, and it seems not unlikely that the Ordinary shares may go to their old price, which was between £6 and £7. Curiously enough, the market in the Founders' shares is quite as free as, if not freer than, that in the Ordinary, and for the Founders' shares the demand is notable, as some people regard them as relatively cheaper than the Ordinary.

TRADE RESULTS.

The report of Bolckow, Vaughan, and Co., Limited, shows what a general improvement in trade took place in the year 1896, and ought to be very satisfactory reading, not only to the shareholders of the concern itself, but also to the numerous body of investors all over the country who are interested in kindred industries. For the year the profits have been £286,000, being an increase of £120,000 over the results of the trade in 1895.

The profit figures for the last seven years appear worthy of reproduction—1890, £317,907; 1891, £74,441; 1892, £116,472; 1893, £141,447; 1894, £135,857; 1895, £160,015; 1896, £286,247—and strikingly illustrate the fluctuations in trade prospects during the last few years, together with the marked improvement which has taken place within the last eighteen months. No wonder railway traffics have been showing, and continue to show, large weekly increases, when industrial concerns are so improving their position, and this, too, in a year when prices have not ruled excessively high, and the satisfactory results are due more to increase in volume of business done than to any other cause.

LIBERTY AND Co., LIMITED.

Among the big retail businesses which have within the last few years been turned into limited companies, and in which the public has been offered a share, none is better known than Liberty and Co., whose report for the past year is just published. The profits amount to £26,000, or an advance of about £2000 on those of the previous year, and, after placing £6000 to reserve and paying the preference interest, it is proposed to give the Ordinary shares a dividend of 12 per cent. and carry forward the considerable sum of £6693. Nothing can be more satisfactory, especially as the Diamond Jubilee celebrations are bound to increase the company's turnover during the coming season.

THE PRUDENTIAL ASSURANCE SOCIETY.

The figures of the Prudential report mark steady progress, and are so large as to almost take one's breath away. In the ordinary branch the number of policies issued was 64,241, assuring £6,507,820, and producing a new annual premium income of £354,526. The premiums received were £2,543,262, an increase of £239,249 over 1895, and the claims were £588,874. In the industrial branch the premiums were £4,578,793, an increase of £226,168, the claims being £1,706,481. The assets amount to £27,059,111. The valuation report states that the surplus in both branches was £1,887,544, including £875,000 brought forward, out of which it is proposed to distribute £783,316, to place £500,000 to a reserve fund, and to carry forward £604,228. The report shows that endowment assurances and other forms of provision for old age are largely adopted, the number of policies securing benefits at the age of sixty and upwards being over 550,000, and securing capital sums exceeding £23,000,000. The jubilee of the company occurs next year, and it has been decided to mark the event in a way that must prove pleasing to the staff, to say the least of it.

Saturday, March 6, 1897.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

All letters on financial subjects to be addressed to the "City Editor, The Sketch Office, Granville House, Arundel Street, Strand."

Our Correspondence Rules are published on the first Wednesday in each month.

CLANMORE.—The concern named by you is quite unknown on the Stock Exchange. We never write private letters except in accordance with Rule 5.

LAW.—The secretary's name we forget, but the office is at Newcastle-on-Tyne, which is sufficient address. The flotation was in June or July last. The capital is 100,000 6 per cent. pref., £100,000 ordinary shares, and some vendor's shares, which take nothing until the ordinary shares get 8 per cent., and then come in and rank with them. We think the ordinary and pref. shares are worth buying. The dividend should be paid at the end of the year's trading.

SHYLOCK.—We hear Mount Jackson is a good mine. Cue 1 has plenty of ore, but it is very poor at present. Any day it might improve, and those connected with it are hopeful. The Share Corporation should improve if there is any general upward movement in West Australian prices, but its shares have, of course, fallen with the general slump in prices of the various mining concerns in which it holds shares.

TENTH.—We would not place a penny of our own money on deposit with the bank you name, which is a money-lending, bill-of-sale sort of affair. Buy a few Sanitas shares, or some *Lady's Pictorial* preference, or Lion Brewery ordinary shares.

PERPLEXED.—The shares of the New Zealand Consolidated have dropped, but not much more than the Goldfields of New Zealand or the Exploration Company. It has powerful people behind it, but so have the other companies. The concern has floated the Inkerman property, in which it holds, we believe, one-third of the whole, and the Waitakauri United, in which it has the same interest. Ample working capital has been provided for both. The directors are about to issue a circular to their shareholders giving full details of the company's position and prospects.

ANNUITY.—Without a breach of trust, except on mortgage, you cannot get more than 3 per cent. on your trust fund, probably not quite that. If your sister likes to agree, however, you might buy (1) Imperial Continental Gas Stock, (2) City of Auckland 1934 or 1930 bonds, (3) A few *Lady's Pictorial* 5 per cent. preference shares, (4) Northern Pacific 4 per cent. prior lien bonds, so spreading your money over different classes of investment, and getting about 5 per cent. as an average return.

J. G.—We don't suppose you will ever see anything you pay into the Big Golden Quarry out of it again, but when the reconstruction is carried out it is not improbable that you might find some foolish person to buy your new shares at more than you are now asked to contribute.

ALPHA.—As a speculative investment, at present prices not bad. All depends on the course of events political in the Transvaal.

ANGLO-ARGENTINE.—You need not be uneasy about your Trams. Hold over the dividend. If you sell during the Account in which the dividend is declared, the buyer will get it; if afterwards, we think you retain it.

UBIQUE.—Both concerns are speculative—very much so. The market price of No. 1 is 1-1½, but No. 2 has no price.

H. C. W.—We really think we have said enough in *The Sketch* about the man Lawson. He is not important enough to find room for the paragraphs you kindly offer to supply. If you have anything new to tell the world about him and will send us the information, we will consider whether it is worth publishing.

A. M.—We think well of Hull and Barnsley Rails as a speculative investment. The new capital is wanted to provide for the large increase in the company's traffic, and is properly treated as capital expenditure. It would manifestly be most unfair to keep back dividends to pay for fresh stations, sidings, and such-like things.

TYPO.—We think financially you have made a big mistake. The underwriters got about 50 per cent. Probably you cannot sell. Because the proprietor of *The Sketch* thinks the machine a good one, it does not follow that the company will do well, especially at first.

J. S.—Both good speculations, especially No. 2.

DIAMOND.—See our remarks on this company's prospectus, which appeared in our issue of Feb. 10. We do not think the shares worth a shilling a bushel.

KRÜGERITE.—(1) We strongly advise you not to deal with either firm. (2) If the dividend was declared after your purchase or in the Account in which you bought, you are entitled to get it. The contango you are charged appears high; we will make inquiries as to what other people pay. On the whole, we should hold; but you run a risk, of course. It looks as if things were nearly at bottom.

PERPLEXED.—Your question means making some inquiries. We will try to answer you next week.

S. B.—Thanks. We have written to you.

FACTA.—Yourself and your friends need be under no alarm about the price of your shares. The allotment was made to over four thousand small holders, and the price is just below par because there are continually little lots coming on the market. The earnings are splendid, and, if you and your friends want a 5½ investment, you may rest in peace. The directors keep increasing their holdings.

FREDERICK.—Very speculative.

INVESTOR.—We look upon the shares as an absolutely safe 5 per cent. investment. The profits and circulations of both papers continue to increase, and at the end of the year you will see that the preference dividend is earned about three times over. Before these lines are in your hands the official quotation will probably be obtained; it is a mere question of days.

ANXIOUS.—The bonds are all straight enough, but the prizes few and far between, especially in the case of the exhibition. You gave too much for what you bought, but otherwise there is no objection to your holding on.

TAURUS.—(1) Speculative, but for this year sure of a good dividend. (2) Fair speculation. (3) Ditto. The price of the two last depends on politics, not merits, for some time to come.

D. E. E.—(1) There has been a big drop because of a report cabled over by Captain Mein suggesting that in places the lode is pinching. We believe the shares are worth buying. The concern was introduced by the Exploration Company, and is backed by very strong people. (2, 3, and 4) The question of buying these shares depends altogether on Transvaal politics and European peace. You should certainly not buy until you see which way the cat is going to jump, then you might average 3 and 4. No. 2 is the best mine on the Rand, but has a life of only about five years. (5) A fair speculative investment for a time, but some day the patents will be evaded and the monopoly gone. The meeting should take place about May, we think.

S. E. C. Y.—We really cannot find space to expose what you call "these dreadful swindles." If you go into competitions in which it is so easy to guess right that everybody wins, what can you expect? And, after all, as it did not cost you anything to compete, we don't see what you have to complain of.

16 A. R.—There is no reason for you to immediately sell. No. 1 is very speculative, and you should get out on a favourable opportunity. The other two may be treated as investments.

JOHN.—Yes, Centaur Cycle shares are very good. We think you should do well if you get an allotment.